

Dorchester Reporter

"The News and Values Around the Neighborhood"

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Latest BPS plan impacts 3 Dot elementary schools

BY BILL FORRY
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Three Dorchester school buildings would close after the 2025-2026 academic year under a plan announced by Mayor Wu and BPS Superintendent Mary Skipper on Tuesday. The announcement—which included confirmation that the Excel High School in South Boston will also close—came after three years of study and

Clap, Winthrop to merge in Frederick space while Dever will close outright

discussions with parents and educators.

The decision—if approved by the Boston School Committee as expected—will result in the outright closure of the Paul

A. Dever School on Columbia Point. Two other elementary schools—Roger Clap on Harvest Street and John Winthrop on Brookford Street—will merge and relocate to the Lilla G. Frederick Pilot Middle School on Columbia Road, which was already slated to close at the end of the current academic year.

Once reopened, the Fred-
(Continued on page 4)



The Dever School on Columbia Point. Reporter file photo

Dot native tracks the time when synagogues flourished in Boston

BY SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

Some of them are hidden behind beige vinyl siding and others stand alongside modern church signage across parts of Dorchester and Mattapan—a Star of David, assorted Hebrew characters, cornerstone markers with dates in the 5,000s drawn from the Jewish calendar. They are the remnants of a time not so long ago when synagogues marked the substantial presence of the Jewish community in these and other neighborhoods of Boston.

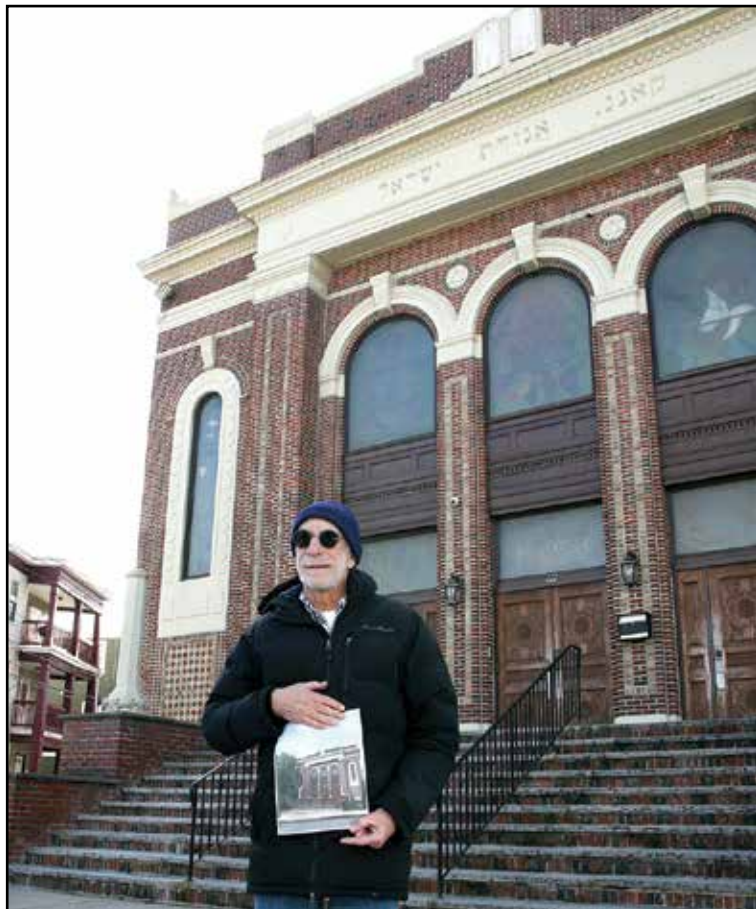
What life was like in those times is familiar to 75-year-old Jeff Calish, who grew up in Dorchester in the 1950s before his family relocated to Randolph. He resettled here in 1986 and recently began leading tours and giving lectures across the city on the history of the Jewish community in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan.

Last November, Mass-Pocha, the journal of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston, published his history, "The Synagogues of Roxbury, Dorchester, & Mattapan." With the help of the Dorchester Historical Society (DHS), he presented his first lecture over a year ago. He also presented more recently to the UMass Boston OLLI senior group, and at the Mattapan and Parker Hill branch libraries.

"I try to make it more than just the synagogues," said Calish. "The buildings are a big part of it, but it's about the people, too, those that were inside the buildings and came from those buildings."

Calish grew up on Strathcona Road in Four Corners

(Continued on page 13)



Jeff Calish spent his early years in Dorchester's once-large Jewish community. Here, he stands in front of what was the Russian Shul, Agudas Israel Anshe Sford, on Woodrow Avenue. Across the street, was the former Congregation Hadrath Israel building once known as the Lithuanian Shul. It is now the Friendly Church of Christ. Seth Daniel photos



Boston Police Capt. Steven Sweeney: "It's like coming home." BPD photo

New captain takes charge at C-11

BY SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

Boston Police Capt. Steven Sweeney has taken the helm at the C-11 police district in Dorchester after a re-assignment from his most recent post as commander of the South End's D-4 district about two weeks ago. Capt. Shawn Burns, who has been in charge at C-11 since 2022, has switched places with Sweeney, taking over in the South End.

Sweeney was in attendance at the Columbia-Savin Hill Civic Association meeting on Monday to make his introduction. He noted that he spent seven years as commander in the South End but started his career as a patrolman in Dorchester.

"I'm still getting my feet wet here, and this is my second meeting," he said. "However, I started at C-11 in 1999 and so it's kind of like coming home."

Morrissey developer tells civic group that he'll honor pledge on \$750k contribution

BY SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

A new partner in the massive 35-75 Morrissey Boulevard redevelopment project told the Columbia-Savin Hill Civic Association on Monday night that he will honor a pledge by a previous investor to donate \$750,000 over the next three years to the civic group.

Andrew Flynn, of Boston-based Copper Mill, attended Monday evening's civic group meeting and confirmed that his firm plans to convey the funds to the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester (BGCD), which has agreed to act as a fiscal agent for the gift.

The association voted last year to accept the unprecedented donation from the Center Court development firm, which is no longer involved in the project. The group's leaders say they intend to use the funds, in part, for programming and planning initiatives in its part of Dorchester.

Flynn's company filed a Letter of Intent with the Boston Planning Department on Dec. 20 on the proposal, which includes the construction of several new buildings on parcels between the existing Southline property (former Boston Globe headquarters) and the JFK-UMass MBTA station. The buildings—a mix of residential and commercial units—would be built out over the next decade.

Last week, Flynn told The Reporter that the first phase will target 75 Morrissey Blvd.—formerly the Channel 56 TV station property—with a 750-unit residential unit layout. Subsequent phases would play out at 55 Morrissey Blvd. (currently Beasley Media), and 35 Morrissey Blvd., the present home of the Star supermarket. He said he hopes to keep the Star Market somewhere within the development.

At Monday's meeting, Flynn spoke to about 75 people gathered inside the BGCD's McLaughlin Youth Center and viewers online.

"We're here tonight for an introduction and it will be the first of many ongoing dialogues and conversations to come," he said. "First and foremost, I don't have any big fancy plans yet to show you because they haven't been developed yet."

"We need to earn your trust and understanding and we're not entitled to it," he added. "The development industry has earned

(Continued on page 12)

Scoping out issues in 2025

Municipal elections loom as headline grabbers in the new year. Look for Mayor Wu to draw at least one challenger to her bid for a second, four-year term. And expect details on plans for a "reboot" at the Carney campus. Page 11.

Financial matters, with the MBTA in the middle, look to dominate discussion again on Beacon Hill. Page 10

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Police, Courts & Fire

Dot man, 18, arraigned on first-degree murder charge in Brockton homicide

An 18-year-old man from Dorchester is facing first-degree murder charges after he allegedly stabbed a 19-year-old man to death in a Brockton home early on Jan. 4. Jayden Fernandez was arraigned Monday in Brockton District Court for allegedly killing Kyre Ambrose, who was attacked in the basement of his mother's residence just before 2 a.m. on Saturday morning, according to the Brockton Enterprise. The victim was a graduate of Boston Arts Academy and has been featured in Reporter articles as a dancer and performer since his childhood years.

The Enterprise reported that Ambrose was stabbed 28 times. Fernandes was ordered held without bail at his arraignment after his arrest on Sunday in the parking lot of a Newton hospital, where he had sought treatment for an injury to his hand, according to media reports.

...

A woman who was listed on the BPD's "most wanted" list recently was arrested on Monday at an Ashmont Street residence, along with a man who was also sought by police for outstanding warrants, including illegal gun charges. Members of the Youth Violence Task Force took Henry Barboza into custody around 1:40 p.m. at 348 Ashmont St. According to a BPD account, Barboza was accompanied in the apartment by 45-year-old Josephine Simard, who was wanted on "nine active warrants," including larceny and credit card fraud charges. Police also confiscated a firearm during their sweep of the residence. Barboza will face a new charge for the gun and ammunition they found at the scene, police said.

...

A 51-year-old man who was allegedly selling bootleg cigarettes and marijuana out of his car behind the Stop & Shop on Blue Hill Avenue in Grove Hall was arrested on Saturday after police found he was also carrying an unlicensed handgun. Police say Manestream Forty-Four "resisted by pushing an officer and attempting to flee in his vehicle" before he was taken into custody.

Police say they decided to crack down because of "numerous complaints from local residents about drug activity and the illicit sale of unstamped cigarettes in the area, which negatively impacted the community and nearby businesses," and that they watched Forty-Four exchange cigs for cash on both Friday and Saturday. Suffolk County Probate Court records show the Department of Revenue has been wrangling with him over child support since at least 2003.

A text to delete with a swift sweep

Over the last couple of days, people all over the city have gotten fraudulent texts, said to be from "the city of Boston," that they have a small unpaid "parking invoice" and that unless they go to the link in the text they will be charged "a late fees of 35\$." Alert readers will note some obvious immediate problems with the text: It comes from a non-617 number, it features sloppy grammar, Americans would never write "35\$" and the link seems kind of odd for a Boston city agency (also, but more obscurely, Boston does not issue "parking invoices").

-UNIVERSAL HUB

Mattapan's Daily Table store has shut its doors

The Daily Table has closed its Mattapan Square store location on the ground level of The Loop building at 474 River St., according to a letter sent to customers by CEO Sasha Purpura.

The non-profit grocery chain's original store in Dorchester's Codman Square will stay open. The chain operates three other shops, in Cambridge, Roxbury, and Salem.

"Unfortunately," Purpura wrote in the announcement, "the Mattapan location did not achieve the level of impact we had hoped for in addressing the high levels of food insecurity in the area. The decision to close the store was made after careful consideration and reflects our commitment to ensuring that every dollar entrusted to us by our funders and support-



The now closed Daily Table location on River Street in Mattapan. Reporter file photo

ers has a maximum social impact.

"While this was not the outcome we hoped for when we opened the store, we are proud to have served this community, are grateful for your support, and are

eager to apply what we have learned from this experience to help inform future opportunities," Purpura wrote.

In a related note, the chain has reinstated its Double Up Food Bucks (DUF) program, which

provides EBT cardholders with an additional 50 percent off certain items. It paused the program last fall after it failed to renew the funding that had previously supported it.

-REPORTER STAFF

Bill on Healey's desk would hike fines for Boston code violations

Boston could soon gain the authority to impose fines of up to \$2,000 on property owners, landlords, and businesses that violate the city's sanitary code under a bill that Beacon Hill lawmakers sent to Gov. Healey's desk on Dec. 31.

The standing maximum fine is \$300 for non-criminal violations of city ordinances.

While Senate Democrats earlier this month killed the Boston home rule petition that would have temporarily adjusted the city's property-tax

split, lawmakers quietly finalized the fee hike measure during their end-of-session frenzy.

The city's fine limit was last raised in 1989. The new bill would also allow Boston to adjust the maximum fine for inflation every five years.

The House passed the Rep. Kevin Honan legislation on July 22. The Senate gave it initial approval on July 30 but didn't pass it back to the House until Dec. 26. Both branches enacted the measure last Monday afternoon.

Boston City Councillor Liz Breadon, who co-filed the initial proposal, has said that stiffening penalties can help crack down on repeat offenders who do not keep their properties clean - and are not deterred by the existing fee. The measure also aims to tackle the city's

rodent problem.

"One of the big issues we have is that we have a few chronic offenders who basically see paying a fine as a cost of doing business, and they don't actually improve the sanitation, they don't improve conditions around the building," Breadon told the News Service in July.

-ALISON KUZNITZ SHNS

State grants boosts Dot Bay EDC rehab of Uphams bank property

Dorchester Bay EDC has received a state grant worth \$579,533 to help transform the former Dorchester Savings Bank into a commercial space to support arts, culture, and community-oriented uses

in Uphams Corner.

The grant was part of a total of \$18.7 million in awards from the Community One Stop for Growth that the Healey-Driscoll administration announced last month.

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City of Boston Planning Dept. hosts a virtual public meeting on Mon., Jan. 13, at 6 p.m. to discuss the Neighborhood Housing zoning initiative. Register for the meeting by logging onto bit.ly/neighborhood-housing-public-meeting. For more info, go to bostonplans.org/neighborhood-housing.

Jose Mateo Ballet Theatre hosts an open house at its Dorchester location at 14 Cushing Ave. for dancers ages 3-10. Free trial classes offered. Pre-register at ballet-theatre.org or call 617-945-1944.

The 2025 Project DEEP Celebrate Dorchester calendars are now on sale at College Hype on Gallivan Boulevard and The Daily

on Savin Hill Ave. The calendars feature original watercolors by Dorchester artist Celia McDonough and cost \$15 while supplies last. All proceeds benefit Project DEEP, which assists neighborhood kids and teens with a one-on-one tutoring program and other educational supports, including high school placement assistance, and exam preps. See projectdeep.org for more info. Margo Gabriel, author of the Expat Kitchen Cookbook will discuss the Haitian tradition of Soup Joumou and other New Year food traditions during a culinary talk and tasting hosted by Tamika Francis on Thurs., Jan. 9, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Just-Bookish, 1463

Dorchester Ave. On Thurs., Jan. 16, the Polish American Citizens Club (PACC) of Boston will swear in newly elected officers and directors during a ceremony at 6:30 p.m. at 82 Boston St, Dorchester. This year's officers are President Stasia Kacprzak, Vice President Eric Basile, Secretary Erica Manczuk, and Treasurer Peter Dziedzic. The leadership team also includes a board of directors composed of Joanna Curry, Jay Judas, Dawn Morris, Steve Poftak, and Keith Stocks. The social club was first formed as the Young Polish Men's Club in 1924. A little over a decade later a new club, PACC, was built

and opened in 1939. In the years following WWII, an influx of Polish Immigrants and refugees joined the club, helping it become a fixture of Boston's Polish American community.

Author Danielle Legros Georges discusses her upcoming book, "Three Leaves, Three Roots: Poems on the Haiti-Congo Story," a collection of creative reconstructions of the Haiti-Congo experience at the Mattapan branch of the Boston Public Library on Sat., Jan. 18, at 2:30 p.m.

SEND IN EVENT NOTICES TO NEWSEDITOR@DOTNEWS.COM

Union neighbor purchases Dot Brewing Company building Plumbers Local 12 buy 'positive news' for us, says brewery's CEO

By SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

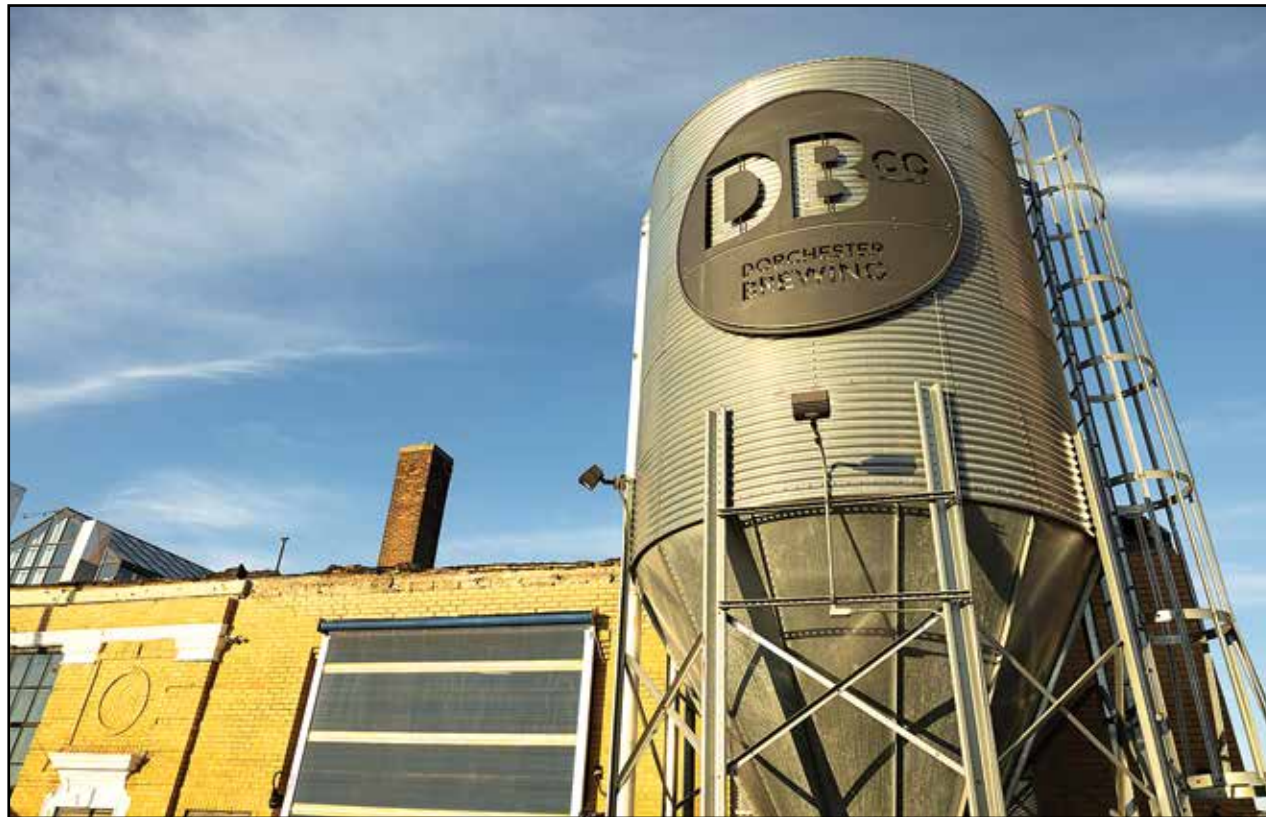
The Dorchester Brewing Company (DBCo.) building on Massachusetts Avenue has been sold to an abutting trade union in a deal that will not impact the ongoing operations of the popular brewery.

Travis Lee, of TLee Development, sold the building at 1246-1250 Massachusetts Ave. for \$10.18 million in late November to an LLC controlled by the Plumbers and Gasfitter's Local 12 union, which owns the property next door to the brewery at 1240 Massachusetts Ave.

Lee said the sale will allow the DBCo. to stay in place in the near term with a lower lease payment. "I had the opportunity to sell the building," he added, "and have the business end up with a lower occupancy cost for the next couple of years, which is desperately needed," said Lee.

In a statement to The Reporter this week, Plumbers Local 12 Business Manager James Vaughan confirmed the sale.

"We see this as a long-term opportunity to grow in the community where we have been located for



The Dorchester Brewing Co. building on Massachusetts Avenue has been sold to the Plumbers Union next store, but the brewery remains open as a tenant. Inset: Dorchester Brewing Co. co-owner Matt Malloy. Photos by Flavio DeBarros

more than 40 years," he said. "There's a likelihood that in coming years the union will need to expand and/or replace its existing facilities. This deal meets the current needs of our valued small business neighbor as they navigate their future but also provides a path forward for our union as we grow and offer training

programs that bring good middle class jobs into the community."

Dorchester Brewing Co. CEO Matt Malloy said the sale is good news for the brewery, despite rumors to the contrary.

"A lot of people thought we were selling the business and we're definitely not doing that," Malloy said in an interview on



Dec. 27. "When you're a small business and you can take a large rent payment off the books, that is really good news. It's very positive news for us. I was leasing from Travis Lee and now I'm leasing from the Plumber's Union."

Malloy said the brewery has changed other things recently within its operations, including

shutting down its contract brewing business. That was a side business whereby they brewed beers for other brands in their facilities, a common line of business for small breweries.

"The beer market is changing and ever fluid," said Malloy. "We were brewing beer for 12 to 14 other breweries at a time. We changed that line of business. But our tap room and wholesale business is continuing... You adjust to the market, and we're set up for success now for the next couple of years."

Malloy noted that DBCo operates a brisk party and function rental business to add to their daily operations at the Mass. Avenue spot. In January and February, they are waiving all room fees for rental spaces. And this month they will be unveiling a product that is not yet ready for a full announcement, but one they are excited about.

"In the month of January, we're going to launch a really unique product that will transform us almost into a full bar," he hinted, saying the community should stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks.



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Latest BPS plan impacts 3 Dot elementary schools

(Continued from page 1) Cape Verdean Creole academy modeled on a successful dual-language Haitian Kreyol academy within the Mattahunt School in Mattapan. Two other city schools— Mary Lyon Pilot High School in Brighton and Commu-

nity Academy in Jamaica Plain— will also close. Those changes would take effect after the end of the 2025-2026 school year.

In Dorchester, the Dever Elementary on Columbia Point will stop accepting new students to its classrooms immediately. Students in grades 5 and 6 will continue on track to matriculate from the Dever on a normal schedule over the next two years, but students in earlier grades will be transferred to new locations.

The Dever is located directly next door to the Ruth Batson Academy, which was re-named last year but was formerly the McCormack-BLCA campus. BPS is currently seeking state funds to build a new complex for Batson Academy, which includes grade 7-12. The city won a victory in December when the Massachusetts School Building Authority voted to include the academy on its list of approved project to fund in the future.

Supt. Skipper said on Tuesday that she believes that “we will need the Dever property” as the planning for an expanded Batson Academy complex moves forward.

In the case of the Clap and Winthrop elementary buildings, Skipper said there is no plan yet for any potential re-use of the buildings on Harvest Street and Brookford Street, respectively. The buildings will go “offline” at the close of the 2026 academic year and “future



“We’ve seen enrollment stabilize,” said BPS Supt. Mary Skipper, shown above at a recent school department meeting. “And that gives us confidence that we won’t see a dramatic decrease, but a leveling off. I think that’s very good news, that people are choosing BPS.” Below, the entrance to the Lilla G. Frederick School building on Columbia Road.



uses will be considered. Right now, we don’t have a specific plan for those buildings,” Skipper told reporters.

The closure of Excel High School on South Boston’s Dorchester Heights would happen at the end of the 2026 academic year. But Skipper indicated on Tuesday that the building itself would be renovated and eventually re-open as an “anchor high school.” She said that “the intent would be to do some investment in that building,” noting that Excel High School currently only occupies roughly one-third of the former Southie High space.

“It has very good bones,” she said.

Skipper estimated that the closures, mergers, and grade adjustments announced on Tuesday would likely reduce costs to the school district amounting to perhaps \$10-20 million once affected. But, she said, cost savings was not the object of the decision.

“Our intent is to reinvest some of the dollars because we need to be able to reinvest to create high-quality seats,” Skipper said.

The mayor echoed that sentiment. “The proposals today come out of three years of focused and intentional work to get this right,” she said, calling the facilities plan “a new approach on how to finally get things done that have been needed for decades.” She added, “I

know as a BPS mom and mayor the magic that is happening in every single one of our classrooms across the district every day,” but, she noted, they are happening “despite the conditions of the buildings they are in.”

The method behind the closure decisions have been derived in part from a scoring system and a “real-time database of conditions within each building,” Wu said.

“We are making decisions based on criteria vetted in the community,” she added.

Skipper said that while BPS has seen a steady decline in enrollment in recent years—a trend that dates back decades—this latest round of decisions are based on projections through the year 2030 that suggest a “leveling-off” in the post-Covid years.

“We’ve seen enrollment stabilize,” said Skipper. “And that gives us confidence that we won’t see a dramatic decrease, but a leveling off.” She added, “I think that’s very good news, that people are choosing BPS.”

The rationale for outright closings varies, but the district says it used a framework that included low scores for “building experience,” which includes insufficient space to provide “a full range of inclusive programming for students with disabilities and multilingual learners.”

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Dever School closure comes as a surprise to some on the Point

By **SETH DANIEL**
NEWS EDITOR

For some parents in the Paul A. Dever Elementary School community on Columbia Point, the closure of their K-6 school was an unexpected hit on their radar on Monday night. Cheryl Buckman, who attended the Dever as a child and has a child there now, received a letter via the Parent Square app at 9:15 p.m.

"I read it with tears in my eyes," Buckman said. "I had to figure out how to have the courage to tell my autistic 12-year-old that he won't have that safety net there for him like he thought. He thought he would always be able to go back and see his teachers and his school."

Boston Public Schools (BPS) officials said Tuesday that the sixth-grade class at the Dever this year will graduate, and so will the current fifth-grade class next year. However, no new students will be taken next year and those in lower grades will be routed to other schools.

"I'm not so much defending my sixth-grade son but really the kids behind him," said Buckman. "They are so small and have no voice to stand up to these bullies. You can't just put a lock on the door and say that's

it. We're going to have to be there for these kids, be their backbone, because they'll need us."

The Dever School is unique in that it's under state receivership, and the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has approved the closing. On Tuesday, a spokesperson for DESE said that the agency "understands Boston Public Schools' urgent need to align the number of seats in the district with the number of students and is allowing the district to close the Dever Elementary School in 2026 as part of a system-wide facilities plan."

For parents at the school, academic improvement had increased, and the school nearly exited receivership last year.

"We got so close to getting out of [it]. Such hard work was done, and all that just for this – a closure," said Buckman.

Supt. Mary Skipper said the Dever School students have a very "fractured walk zone" and many don't live near the school. "We believe we are able to get students closer to home with that closure," said Skipper.

Councillor John Fitzgerald said on Tuesday that the closure news is

a mixed bag. His district includes both the Roger Clap Elementary School on Harvest Street and the Dever. The Clap is to merge with the John Winthrop School and re-open in Sept. 2026 at the now-vacant Lilla Frederick School on Columbia Road.

"I think everyone is comfortable with the Clap closing and merging with the Winthrop at Lilla Frederick and those students will have a chance to be closer to home, but the Dever is a tough one," he said.

"But given the population there," he said, "they are spread out over [Dorchester] and about one-fifth are from Mattapan. There will be a chance to keep some of these kids closer to home and hopefully they'll get priority status."

"If you're a sixth grader at the Dever, well, you knew the end was coming, but if you're in second or third grade and you're a kid with your friend group there, that's not going to be easy," he noted.

Will Austin, a public school advocate who works with the non-profit Boston Focus group, criticized school closures that he said are not done in partnership with the school communities.

"The gap between en-

rollment and the buildings we have is saying to families that every January and every spring you're going to get more news," he said. "It's not saying to them 'Let's produce a plan together,' but rather that we (BPS) will tell you what's happening each year. There is not a long-term plan... What we have to ask is will these closures provide a better educational experience for kids... Is it providing a better option?"

The Boston Teacher's Union (BTU) said students and educators have had to endure "crumbling" buildings for far too long. In a statement, the union called on BPS to commit to building three new schools annually within their plan.

"The conversation cannot be simply about whether to retain or close poorly crumbling and dilapidated buildings. [It] must be about how soon the district can complete the construction and renovations necessary to provide high-quality learning environments for every single BPS student, without exception," read the statement.

Councillor Brian Worell's district includes the Frederick School. "There's no right way to close a school," he

said. "With declining enrollment, BPS needs to right-size to ensure every student is in a high-quality learning environment, and I am committed to working to ensure that those decisions are equitable, and that students and families are supported in the transition."

Councillor Ed Flynn said the loss of Excel Academy, which occupied about one-third of the total space at the former South Boston High School building, was a huge loss. He said he was "disappointed" with the lack of communication, and he was also concerned about the future of a "robust" Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) Leadership Program there.

He also mentioned the World War I memorial on site, and the other veterans memorabilia attached to the school.

"With the closing of Excel High School, we will lose the remaining high school in South Boston," he said. "This is a tragic loss for the many families with graduates from both South Boston High School and Excel High School, as well as the community at large."

Councillor at-Large Erin Murphy echoed Flynn's critique that

decisions were made "behind closed doors." She said that "decisions of this magnitude must include meaningful input from school communities – not just announcements after the fact. Our students, families, and educators deserve better."

Councillor at-Large Julia Mejia said she was "disappointed" that she wasn't briefed on the decisions before they were announced.

"This is a situation where if we had an elected School Committee rather than an appointed one, we'd be having a different conversation," she said. "We wouldn't be learning about it on the news. There would have been more deliberation and a different process. This appointed School Committee will be making a decision on Jan. 22 that has already been made."

Austin said that if the district is aiming for cost savings with these closures, it will be about two things that overwhelm the budget – "people and buses." He said if you don't change the amounts of people and buses, you have not changed the budget. Boilers, custodians, school administrators, they don't drive the budget or the costs."

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Healey orders inspection of all shelters after arrest in Revere in drugs, arms case

By SAM DORAN
STATE HOUSE
NEWS SERVICE

Gov. Healey on Monday announced a review of shelter policy amid a barrage of questions over how a Dominican national — who the feds say entered the country illegally — came to be at a Revere family shelter with 10 pounds of lethal drugs and a large-capacity rifle.

The December arrest of 28-year-old Leonardo Andujar Sanchez was announced last week by the Revere Police Department, which said its officers and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department recovered an estimated \$1 million worth of fentanyl and "a loaded AR-15 with ammo" from a room at the Quality Inn in Revere.

"It's outrageous that this individual took advantage of our shelter system to engage in criminal activity," Healey said in a press statement on Monday. I've ordered an inspection of all shelter units, beginning with the Revere site, and a full review of our intake processes to determine any additional steps

that we can take to prevent criminal activity in shelters."

Healey's statement came after members of the House Republican Caucus wrote to the governor earlier in the day about their "deep concerns and outrage" raised by last week's headlines out of Revere. The GOP lawmakers, led by Rep. Bradley Jones Jr., sent a copy of their letter to Housing Secretary Edward Augustus, whose office oversees the emergency assistance shelter system.

"How is it possible an undocumented immigrant here illegally is receiving a benefit of emergency family shelter," caucus members wrote to Healey, "even though our laws do not allow it? How is it this individual wasn't flagged in a so-called comprehensive background check upon application for shelter? How is it despite the strict gun laws of the Commonwealth this individual was allegedly able to acquire a high-capacity firearm? How was a criminal enterprise being run out of a family shelter as he allegedly

obtained fentanyl and cocaine that he was allegedly selling from the shelter's motel room?"

Sen. Ryan Fattman put it as bluntly in an interview with the News Service on Monday: "What the hell is the vetting process? Who's looking at these people?"

Sanchez was arraigned last week in Chelsea District Court on trafficking in fentanyl and 10 firearm charges, according to Revere police. He is a Dominican national who "unlawfully entered the US on an unknown date at an unknown location sometime within the past year," according to Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) Boston, a law enforcement directorate within ICE, which said it has filed an immigration detainer in his case.

Immigration detainers are aimed at criminal noncitizens, according to ERO Boston, and request that the local jurisdiction alert ICE before that person is released from custody.

"Mr. Andujar [Sanchez] has been accused of serious crimes, and ERO Boston takes its

public safety mission very seriously — which is why we've lodged an immigration detainer against him with Revere police. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has charged him with possessing dangerous weapons and drug trafficking, and with the Revere Police Department's cooperation, we intend to take him into ICE custody upon his release," ERO Boston acting field office director Patricia Hyde said in a statement.

ERO Boston has complained in recent months of Massachusetts courts disregarding its immigration detainers.

The Supreme Judicial Court's 2017 Lunn ruling found that state law "provides no authority for Massachusetts court officers to arrest and hold an individual solely on the basis of a Federal civil immigration detainer." And the Trial Court's official policy for interacting with ICE says that people should not be processed or handled any differently because they are subject to a detainer.

That prompted Sen. Fattman, a Sutton Republican, to kick off Monday morning's Senate session with a floor speech decrying a lack of legislative follow-up on the seven-year-old Lunn decision.

"And since 2017 we have done nothing,"

Fattman said on the floor. "Nothing to change the standard, nothing to change this law. While some of us have tried, present company included, I'm telling you today that that attempt is going to continue."

House and Senate Republicans filed a Lunn response bill in October 2024, which they said would allow state courts to hold "convicted criminals and repeat offenders who have been subsequently arrested for additional crimes and who are subject to an immigration detainer by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement." That bill died without action at the end of the term on New Year's Eve.

Fattman told the News Service that Republicans are working to file a "series" of relevant bills this term.

"Many of the people who are coming here through the Right To Shelter Law are good people. They're good families. They want to make a better life. But guess what? Criminals aren't stupid, and they know how to take advantage of laws, and they do it all the time. ... And they get a free place to stay while trafficking drugs out of a hotel room. I mean, it's outrageous. And it must end," Fattman said.

State Republican Par-

ty Chair Amy Carnevale also knocked Sanchez's alleged crimes at the family shelter.

"Why are long-term Massachusetts families left waiting for emergency housing while a criminal illegal immigrant is conducting a criminal enterprise from within state-funded housing? This amounts to state-funded crime," Carnevale said.

Healey said her administration was talking with local law enforcement and federal immigration officials about the Sanchez case, and pinned some of the blame on "federal inaction," saying, "This further underscores our broken federal immigration system and the urgent need for Congress and the White House to act on a border security bill to prevent criminals from entering our communities."

Top Beacon Hill Democrats supported a border security bill last February that was endorsed by President Biden and featured major immigration reforms. Massachusetts Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Edward Markey joined their Republican Senate counterparts in blocking the bill's advancement despite entreaties from Healey, Senate President Karen Spilka, and House Speaker Ronald Mariano.

Dorchester Reporter

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Reporter's People News about people in and around our Neighborhoods

Club Passim awards grant to Dot musician Pearl Scott

By CASSIDY MCNEELEY
REPORTER STAFF

Pearl Scott, a 32-year-old singer, songwriter, and producer from Dorchester is one of 23 New England-based musicians who will share in a \$40,500 grant aimed at helping them make ends meet while they focus on their music careers.

Club Passim, an intimate folk music venue located in Harvard Square, has funded the awards through the Iguana Music Fund, an annual grant program established to help musicians overcome financial limitations.

"For the last eight years, I have been administering our grant programs, which includes the Iguana Fund," said club manager Abby Altman, who noted that the club's involvement goes back 17 years. "The Iguana Fund is such a cool thing," she said, "and I love that we get to do this."

Since its establishment in 2008, the Fund has distributed around \$630,000 in annual grants. Over



With the help of the Iguana Music Grant, Dorchester artist Pearl Scott will be able to record new music. Will Utley photo

the past year, more than 200 musicians applied, but only 23 were selected, and each was awarded \$500 to \$2,000.

"To apply, you have to be an artist with strong ties to New England," said Altman. "Mostly that means people are living and working in New England, but it can also be people that went

to Berklee or grew up here, and now they've moved. But most of the folks that receive funding are living, working, and performing in New England."

While there is no application fee, the musicians must have that tie to the area and explain how the funds will help them complete a project that will

advance their careers. "We're really interested in funding artists that need a little bit of help to get their project started," Altman said.

Scott is an Indiana native who moved into Savin Hill two years ago and came to "love the sense of community" that people bring to Dorchester. "I immediately felt like I had a lot to give and offer this space. [It] was exactly what I needed to feel like I can make this a home, I can put down roots here and build something really special."

Scott's earliest performances were in her family's living room before she took to the stage as she got older as a part of choir and musical theatre performances. She then went on to minor in music at Indiana University Bloomington before joining the US Army.

"I was a vocalist in the Army bands for four years," Scott said. "That trained me in a different way. I was not an artist there. I was a soldier

meant to follow orders."

Scott came to Boston after her service was completed. She described her current style as a "fusion. There's definitely a blend. I don't think I could define it by a genre. I'm an emotive artist, a lot of my emotions and my traumas and my healing comes through music via the avenue of jazz and R&B."

Scott notes that at Passim she has had the opportunity to share her thoughts and beliefs with passionate listeners while being supported by an amazing music community. She is especially grateful for Altman and Passim managing director Matt Smith.

"Every time Abby and Matt are involved in anything, I know I am going to feel safe, loved, and welcomed in the space," said Scott. "They've

been huge in facilitating, just nurturing me as an artist and making me remember who I am and the stories I need to tell."

In December, Scott was told of her \$2,000 award, which she plans to use to record an album and produce visuals for some of her songs. "The hope is to have an album that's represented in all mediums," she said.

"Because I'm still new to Boston, I'm still putting down my roots and figuring out who my community is," she added. "I've built some wonderful connections so far but there is more to be had, so my goal is to find and to use local artists in the project."

On May 12, Scott will join the 22 other musicians at Passim for the 2024 grant recipient showcase at 7 p.m.

'First Day' hike and history discussions open new year at Pope John Paul II Park



DCR Ranger Antoine Cureton led a group of about 50 residents on a First Day Hike of Pope John Paul II Park on Jan. 1. Photos courtesy Lee Toma



Hikers on New Year's Day followed an easy path of about one mile around the park.

By SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

About 50 people turned out for the annual First Day Hike at Pope John Paul II Park sponsored by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Neponset River Greenway Council.

The First Day Hikes program originated in the nearby Blue Hills Reservation in 1992, according

to the DCR, and has since become a popular activity that has been adopted by parks systems in all 50 states. The Blue Hills event has several different hikes including some strenuous ones on rocky hills. In contrast, the Dorchester walk is much more family friendly. The DCR's Antoine Cureton led the walk, which circled around the park's

ballfields for about a mile in total. Discussions included the history of the 66-acre facility and how parts of it were a drive-in movie theater and a trash dump.

Looking ahead, many are waiting on the opening this spring of the Neponset River trail extension to Morrissey Boulevard, as well as plans in the works to

connect the southern end of the trail at Neponset Valley Parkway in Hyde Park to the Blue Hills Reservation in Milton. The Neponset River Greenway Council will host walks and talks along the trail this winter highlighting how king tides inundate low-lying areas like Tenen Beach.

YESTERYEAR ARCHIVE DORCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY Railroad Bridge between Savin Hill and Commercial Point



Edward Mitchell Bannister painted the landscape in the top illustration in 1856. He used artistic license to not include the bridge in his painting. The sketch of the bridge below was published in "Ballou's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion," 1855.

Bannister was born in 1828, in New Brunswick, Canada. He was among the first Black Americans to win major recognition as an artist. In the 1840s, he moved to Boston, where he studied at the Lowell Institute. In the late 1860s, he married and moved to Providence, Rhode Island. When he won first prize in landscape painting at the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876, it caused a sensation.

The archive of these historical posts can be viewed on the blog at dorchesterhistoricalsociety.org. The society's William Clapp House and James Blake House are open to the public on the third Sunday of the month from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Editorial

Violent crime is down, but there's still room to improve

"This city has never been safer, period."

It's the sort of pronouncement that makes slightly superstitious newsroom editors and probably a lot of cops, prosecutors, and savvy citizens a bit queasy with the thought of jinxing a run of good luck.

But, the person who made this declaration during a Dec. 27 press conference alongside Mayor Michelle Wu was none other than the Boston Police Commissioner Michael Cox, a seasoned cop who grew up in Roxbury, lives in Dorchester, and certainly understands the history and challenges our neighborhoods have faced.

By Cox's assessment, Boston's violent crime rate decline is about much more than luck. He has good reason to be proud of the men and women of his police force and his command staff.

It's a tangible fact that the rate of violent crimes here in Boston is well below that of comparable cities across the US. There were 24 murders in '24, down from 38 the year before—a drop of one-third and the lowest number recorded since 1957, Cox says. There were also fewer shootings and gunshot victims year-to-year between '24 and '23. Taken together, that accounts for a 14 percent drop in gun related violence compared to last year and 37 percent against the five-year average. It's the third consecutive year of a drop in shootings across Boston.

Even the most cynical among us can stand up and applaud the direction this is going and root hard for 2025 to see even further improvement. And from a political perspective, the mayor and her public safety team would be getting savaged by their usual critics if the opposite were true. So, while Mayor Wu specifically said her late December presser wasn't a victory lap—she should get credit where credit is due.

But it's also a fact that overall crime ticked up ever so slightly—by one percentage point—last year, driven by more aggravated assaults, commercial burglaries, and larcenies. All is not perfect, not by a long stretch.

This week, Councillor Ed Flynn—who has become Wu's loyal opposition personified on the council—called for a hearing to review 2024 crime stats and dig deeper into the categories that did, in fact, tick-up last year. He also wants a review of the BPD's crime lab and delays in testing that could, he warns, impact investigations into sexual assault cases.

Such a hearing should be embraced by the Wu administration, which can confidently point to significant success in making our neighborhoods safer on their watch. Boston can get better still by examining trends in categories that need further improvement and investment in personnel, equipment, and community partnerships that the mayor, Cox, and others credit with helping drive down the gun problem.

Many of us who've lived here long enough remember the "bad old days" of the late 1980s and early 1990s when young people were dying violently on our streets by the dozens and there was a palpable sense of disorder and menace at large. We've come a long way from 152 homicides in 1990, but we can and should do even better.

Let's get that hearing scheduled and hear more about what's going right from law enforcement and their partners. Boston has a good story to tell. Let's talk about it more often.

-Bill Forry

The Reporter

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Investment key to Franklin Park's potential

BY DOROTHY (DOT) FENNEL

When landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted—of Central Park fame—moved from New York to Massachusetts 143 years ago, his decision was motivated by potential. Specifically, the potential he saw in a more-than-500-acre plot of rolling orchards, open fields, and scattered woodlands that the City of Boston had just acquired with the goal of turning into the city's largest park.

The development would be Olmsted's final project—the crown jewel of Boston's park system, a treasured space for community, and the crowning achievement of his decorated career. At least, that was the idea.

Today, it's hard to look at Franklin Park and see the jewel that Olmsted envisioned.

We've lived in Egleston Square, right across from Franklin Park, for 20 years. We love our neighborhood and having space for our kids—11, 8, and 5—and our dogs, Ripley and Skye, to explore just steps from our front door. And, like Olmsted, we see so much potential in this park that's more than ten times bigger than the Common.

But, for as long as we can remember, that potential has been squandered. Decades of deferred investment have left the park in a state of disrepair. The paved pathways are scarred with cracks and potholes where tree roots and years of freezing and thawing have taken their toll. If you push a stroller, or use a walker or a wheelchair, the paths are unusable.

And the lack of lighting makes it worse. One of our neighbors is in his eighties. In the summer, he'll walk the bumpy, crooked paths because he wants the exercise. But in the winter, he's forced to spend his afternoons inside because the paths are too dangerous to negotiate in the quickly fading light.

And for families who don't live nearby, the absence of water fountains and public restrooms make it tough to justify the trip. Every parent knows the feeling of packing bags with snacks and games, navigating the journey with little ones, only to arrive and hear, "I have to go to the bathroom." As a mom of three, if I didn't live across the street, I wouldn't chance it.

Then there's White Stadium. The crumbling facade, marshy field, and haggard six-lane track are bad enough. But for the brave souls still determined to run laps or stadium steps, you'd better not work

a 9-5 (or you better be really fast) because it's only open for public use from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays.

And it's not just the physical infrastructure and facilities: In the summer, the vegetation grows into an impenetrable tangle of weeds, trash, and brambles. In some spots, the grass is up to my kids' shoulders. There are so many dead trees that I don't wear headphones while I'm walking, so I'll hear if a limb above tells me I need to run for cover.

Olmsted hoped to preserve the "pleasing rural scenery" of Franklin Park as a place for Bostonians to "go after their day's work is done...to stroll for an hour" and escape the bustle of the city.

Today, the park feels more untamed wilderness than "rural scenery," and strolling after work is out of the question unless you bring a flashlight.

But now, for the first time, it feels like things might change. With credit to Mayor Wu, her administration is taking up the challenge of ending the cycle of neglect and disinvestment in Franklin Park.

Together with Boston Unity Soccer Partners (BUSP), and guided by the Franklin Park Action Plan—informed by the Franklin Park Coalition and residents from Dorchester, Roxbury, and Jamaica Plain—the Wu Administration is proposing to invest in making Franklin Park and White Stadium the kinds of spaces residents deserve.

The renovation will create a state-of-the-art sports stadium for BPS student-athletes, open to the public 15 hours a day, 7 days a week, with year-round maintenance provided by BUSP. Public restrooms and water fountains will make the park viable for residents who don't live across the street; full-time staff will prune trees and prevent overgrowth; and repaving and lighting will make the paths safe and accessible for everyone.

Boston is a beautiful, historic, cutting-edge city. We're a championship city. We're home to our nation's first public school, public library, and yes, public park. We have always recognized the potential in investing in our people and the places that serve them. It's well past time that we act on that recognition and realize Franklin Park's potential.

Dorothy (Dot) Fennell lives with her family in Roxbury.

Our city and its public school athletes deserve a stadium fit for champions

BY HATIM JEAN LOUIS AND TONY DAROCHA

Thirty-two years ago, Lynn Jennings, who grew up an hour west of Boston, became the first American woman to win three consecutive world cross country championships. And she did it, in her words, in "her own backyard."

The nearly four-mile course wound through the hills and trails of Franklin Park, finishing in none other than White Stadium. Back then, it wasn't hard to imagine the stadium hosting a world-class race. When it was built in 1949, White Stadium was considered state-of-the-art. Some 75 years later, it's a different story.

Today, the track at White Stadium fails to meet the standards required for hosting any events held by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), the Mass State Track Coaches Association (MSTCA), or USA Track and Field.

The surface is bubbling up in some places; in others, it's riddled with holes. The inner curb around one of the turns is crumbling, the long jump and triple jump lack adequate runway, and the facility doesn't have enough hurdles to run a 100m race in all six of its lanes (not to mention that most modern tracks have eight lanes).

Forget world championships. Today, White Stadium's track is barely fit to host practices. And it's not just our track and field athletes who are impacted. Ask any coach or student-athlete what it's like to play on the White Stadium field in the days after a heavy rain, like the kind we saw recently, and they'll tell you there are spots where you'd be lucky not to lose your cleats in the mud. It's no wonder that BPS participation rates in athletics are almost half the state average.

And what about the fans? Parents, grandparents, siblings, neighbors, and friends of have BPS student-athletes, please note: If you use a wheelchair, you can't watch them compete because none of the stands are wheelchair accessible. Our student-athletes and their coaches, families, and supporters deserve the best. Today, White Stadium doesn't even offer the bare minimum.

The good news is: That's changing.

Thanks to a partnership between Mayor Wu and Boston Unity Soccer Partners (BUSP), White Stadium will be renovated and restored as the state-of-the-art facility it once was. The proposal would establish a professional grade, ADA-accessible,

multi-sport athletic complex jointly funded by the City of Boston and BUSP.

It would also create an eight-lane track that will meet the standards for hosting MIAA, MSTCA, and US Track & Field events, and it would add game-changing amenities like new locker rooms, a strength and conditioning space with ten full training racks, plus a turf floor for dynamic indoor workouts. The renovations also include adding a sports medicine suite and treatment area complete with training tables, exam rooms, and office space.

In addition, the plan calls for student lounges and study spaces so that our student-athletes have the resources they need to be students first. Today, they lose valuable time commuting to and from the stadium just trying to find a place to study and get homework done before, after, and in between practices.

It's hard to overstate the impact that the creation of a world-class, district-wide athletic hub will have for the BPS Athletics community—the student-athletes, coaches, families, and fans. From off-season training; increased performance, fewer injuries, and better treatment; internship, scholarship, and youth sports programming opportunities; accessibility for para-athletes and fans with disabilities; the ability to host regulation events; and dedicated spaces for academic

programming and support...the list is endless.

And one of the best parts is that the Boston Unity Sports Partners will provide year-round maintenance and operations all at no cost to Boston Public Schools or taxpayers.

Of course, it is still a big investment on the city's part. We've all seen the price tag. But, frankly, it should be a big investment.

We will get out of this project what we put into it, and for decades now what's been put into White Stadium has been next to nothing, and the sad results speak for themselves. The City of Champions shouldn't be home to a stadium in shambles. It's time to invest in a facility that lives up to our name and provides the kind of amenities, environment, and opportunities that our young people and communities deserve.

Hatim Jean Louis is the head coach of the Boston Public Schools Cross Country program. Tony DaRocha is a BPS track coach, president of Boston United Track & Cross Country Club; and head coach of Cross Country at Emmanuel College.



Mary Hemenway Playground on Adams Street is shown in a photo taken in Feb. 1968.

Photo courtesy City of Boston Archives

How I learned about the best way to get positive action out of City Hall

By BILL WALCZAK
REPORTER COLUMNIST

Turning 70 and dealing with a debilitating back operation has given me the opportunity to reminisce about my early days in Boston and how I learned the culture and politics of the city in my early days here.

I grew up in a working-class section of New Jersey near where Route 1, the Garden State Parkway, and the NJ Turnpike intersect. The area was filled with factories in the 1960s and nearly all of the fathers and many of the mothers worked in them. Though my parents were union Democrats, my upbringing wasn't especially political, except for high school anti-war demonstrations, and concern and awareness of racial crises in nearby Newark. The tumultuous '60s taught me that politics could make a huge difference ... or not. I was intrigued.

I came to Boston for college but wound up getting married and leaving school to work on the United Farmworkers Union lettuce boycott in Colorado. In 1973, we returned to Dorchester, found work in a Waltham factory and got involved in Codman Square civic activities, which presented the opportunity to see urban politics up close.

In 1974, I returned to college at UMass Boston and took courses on Massachusetts and Boston history and politics. Part of that education involved going to Boston City Council meetings, where the discourse on urban issues by this collection of personalities and blowhards was both entertaining and engaging. I became a regular attendee.

My wife and I found part time jobs, which in those days were sufficient to both pay rent (\$85/month) and tuition (\$300/semester). With summer coming, I looked for a job that would allow me to be outdoors, and I heard that City Hall hired people on "30-day appointments," mainly for working in parks. I loved the idea of helping to make Boston's parks, in terrible disrepair in those days, usable.

Hearing that the appointments were political, I asked around at a City Council meeting and City Councillor Albert L. "Dapper" O'Neil said that he would put my name in. In June, I got a call from the Parks Department and was assigned to the Dorchester district, under Mr. Doherty, the foreman whose office was in Fields Corner, in the Town Field maintenance building, now the headquarters for All Dorchester Sports & Leadership.

Mr. Doherty asked me where I wanted to work, and I told him Hemenway Park on Adams Street, which I regularly used for basketball. It was in deplorable shape. There was a full-time department worker who was in charge of the park, and the foreman assigned three additional 30-day appointees to work with me. I started going to work at Hemenway and soon noted that I was the only person who was actually there most days – make that all days. I saw the others assigned to the park on Fridays at the Town Field office, where we went to pick up our paychecks. I found out that the full-time worker had a full-time job elsewhere, and was a "no show," as were the other appointees, who seemed to spend most of their time swimming at the quarries in Quincy. One told me that he didn't have to work because his cousin was "the mayor's chauffeur."

This gave me a blank slate at work; I could do

whatever I wanted. So, in addition to cleaning up the park every day, I tended the steep overgrown hill at the eastern edge of the park, which clearly had not been touched in many years. Mr. Doherty got me a powerful grass mower with traction, which I would walk to the park. I started cutting the weeds on the 50-foot hill, which took me a couple of weeks, and removed the overgrown brush. I found a tremendous amount of glass under the weeds, due to the practice of young men drinking at the top of the hill at night and throwing their beer bottles down the slope.

One Friday, I got five 55-gallon drums and filled them with glass. With great effort, I moved them to the top of the hill next to an adjacent street to make it easier for the Parks Department dump truck to pick them up.

I walked to the Town Field office to ask Mr. Doherty to arrange for a pick-up of the barrels, and he told me to head up to Ronan Park, as most Dorchester park workers had been assigned there because there were complaints to the mayor about the conditions in that park. I walked up to Ronan and found about 15 people, none working, some with rakes in their hands, and an empty dump truck with a driver and passenger in the cab. When I went to the driver and asked him to pick up the barrels above Hemenway Park, he said, "The mayor wants us at Ronan Park. We're assigned to Ronan Park and we ain't moving out of here." "But..." I said, and he retorted, "We ain't moving out of here."

Before going back to the park office, I went into the Town Field Tavern, a blood and guts type of bar with a pay phone. It had hit me that if the mayor required the park workers to be at Ronan, he could just as easily tell the dump truck crew to go to Hemenway Park.

I dropped a dime into the phone and called the mayor's office. With my best attempted Boston accent, I said, "Hi, I'm Jimmy O'Connor, and I'm up here at Hemenway Park in Dorchester. A park worker put some 55-gallon drums filled with glass at the top of the hill on Daly Street, and they need to get picked up now, or the boys tonight will just roll them down the hill and make a mess. Can you make sure they get picked up today?"

I waited maybe 15 minutes, and walked into the park office, just as Mr. Doherty was getting off the phone. "Billy, go up to Ronan and tell those guys that the mayor's office wants the barrels at Hemenway picked up!"

Gleefully, I walked back up to Ronan Park and informed the guys in the dump truck of their new assignment. The driver turned to the passenger in the truck and said, "We ain't gonna get no [effen'] break today."

That was my first lesson in how to get City Hall to act. It was clear that the Mayor of Boston was the center of power. I filed that away, and it was very helpful as the Codman Square Health Center board wrestled with Mayor White three years later to allow the facility to be launched in a municipal building.

My 30-day appointment was soon up, and I found out that other appointees were getting re-appointed for another month, so I asked the Fields Corner Little City Hall manager if I could also be re-appointed. The answer was no. Despite my work, my source for the job was from the City Council. I filed that away, too.

Tracking the success of efforts to boost diversity in union construction trades

By LEWIS FINFER
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

Last week's Reporter included a report on a Dec. 23 event at the Sheet Metal Workers Local 17 Hall in Lower Mills in which Gov. Healey signed an executive order on ways to increase construction jobs for women and minorities. At one time, there were virtually no women in the construction trades in Massachusetts. Now, just over 10 percent of the state's union tradespeople are women, according to state figures. That's more than three times the national average.

The Policy Group on Tradeswomen's Issues (PGTI) is one group that has helped hundreds of women find good-paying construction jobs and that supports them once they are on the job. Women like Liz Skidmore from the Carpenters Union, Susan Moir, and others have been leading this effort for years.

The effort has involved the creation of a pipeline from the Building Pathways Pre-Apprentice Training program to a union apprenticeship job in one of the 18 building trades. Building Pathways was launched in 2011 by Marty Walsh, when he was with the Greater Boston Building Trades Council before becoming mayor. He wanted to open up union construction jobs to more minority and women candidates. For many years Mary Vogel led and built up the Building Pathways program and Nancy Luc now leads it.

The Mass. Building Trades Council, headed by Frank Callahan, and the Greater Boston Building Trades Council, headed by Dorchester's Brian Doherty, have been strong supporters for many years. And Chrissy Lynch, the president of MA AFL-CIO, has been instrumental as well.

Then there's the Massachusetts Girls in the Trades, led by Maryanne Ham and others, that is reaching many hundreds of girls in 18 high schools to engage them in considering these career opportunities.

Shamaiah Turner, an African American sheet metal worker since 2012, got her start in the Building Pathways Pre-Apprentice Program. She addressed the recent gathering and pointed to the 60 women in her union.

Goals for hiring of women and minorities on construction jobs are best achieved through Access and Opportunity Committees (AOCs). These include contractors, public officials, union officials, and community groups who review weekly hiring reports detailing hours worked and number of minorities and women working those hours. This leads to subcontractors being informed up front that they will be reviewed on these standards. And when not met, corrective action meetings are held to move them toward reaching the goals.

AOCs have been used at UMass Boston and UMass Amherst construction projects and for the three casinos. The state will now employ AOCs to upcoming multi-billion construction projects at North Station, the Allston Turnpike Interchange, the Cape Cod bridges, and other developments.

Boston also has a Resident Jobs Policy calling for hiring 50 percent Boston residents, 40 percent minorities, and 10 percent women. That dates back to organizing efforts of the United Community Construction Workers led by Chuck Turner in the 1970s and 1980s.

Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) mandate union workers on a construction project. The recently passed Economic Development bill calls for them on all state projects. PLAs also now include a section setting up an Access and Opportunity Committee for each construction project.

To apply to become a union construction worker, visit this link to 18 building trades unions and the different annual times to apply:

mass.gov/doc/Massachusetts-union-apprenticeship-recruitment-opportunities/download.

Our organization, MA Action for Justice, has worked on these issues, too. We led an organizing effort in 2010 that resulted in more than over \$1 million in annual state funding to five pre-apprentice training programs, including Building Pathways and YouthBuild Boston. We also worked on the successful national campaign alongside the Laborers Union, Painters Union, and community groups to get a section added to the federal Bi-Partisan Infrastructure bill – targeted hiring policies for hiring of women and minorities on those construction projects to be funded in that \$1.2 trillion bill by the US Department of Transportation.

Lew Finfer is a Dorchester resident and director of the MA Action for Justice organization.

What to watch for on Beacon Hill this year

BY STATE HOUSE
NEWS SERVICE STAFF

A new legislative session has arrived, and there are already loads of pressing issues that appear ripe for attention from Gov. Healey, Senate President Karen Spilka, House Speaker Ronald Mariano and the rest of Beacon Hill's extended cast of lawmakers, regulators, and bureaucrats.

Mindful that there is almost certain to be a handful of major issues that unexpectedly pop up and demand attention from the governor's administration and Legislature this year, here's a look at some of the already simmering issues that could rise to a rolling boil in 2025:

MBTA Budget Crisis – To many on Beacon Hill, MBTA officials warning that the agency doesn't have enough money feels like the boy who cried wolf – but in that fable, the wolf did eventually show up. It looks like that could be the case in 2025. The T has already spent down its pandemic aid and savings, and now its leaders have few immediate options to navigate a budget gap forecast to be around \$700 million. Slashing spending probably will not get much traction after a concentrated — and, arguably, successful — effort in the last 18 months to staff up and invest in service improvements.

Beacon Hill power players might be gearing up for yet another debate about how to fund the MBTA in the long term, informed by a task force that got an extension on the report that was due to Healey by the end of 2024 and buoyed by surging surtax revenues that must be earmarked for transportation or education. "There's going to be more work around transportation, for sure," Healey told the News Service in her year-end interview last month.

– CHRIS LISINSKI

Steward Ripple Effects – The remnants of the Steward Health Care crisis will continue to reshape the state's fragile health care system, as six hospitals adjust to new owners backed by a state aid package totaling at least \$417 million over three years. Two work groups focused on the voids left by the closures of Carney Hospital in Dorchester and Nashoba Valley Medical Center in Ayer are expected to provide recommendations in early 2025 about community health care needs and ways to improve access to care. UMass Memorial has considered alternative uses for Nashoba, like transforming the hospital's emergency room into an urgent care facility. Under-construction Norwood Hospital, which Steward abandoned, remains closed, and the Healey administration says it's looking for a new operator to finish the project and resume health care services. The Health Policy Commission will be keeping close tabs on Revere Medical, the former Steward physician group acquired by an affiliate of a private equity company.

–ALISON KUZNITZ

Surtax "Surplus" – The voter-approved surtax on high earners has been a bright spot for state budget managers, who otherwise are dealing with uneven tax collections. After the Legislature and Gov. Healey built the fiscal 2024 budget using a conservative estimate for surtax collections, the actual haul far outpaced that figure, leaving more than \$1.2 billion in additional money set aside for future investments in transportation and education.

Top Democrats already have their eyes on spending down that pot, and House budget chief Aaron Michlewitz signaled in October that "we'll probably have to use all of it" on transportation in particular. Healey and the Senate will have their own ideas. The timing overlaps with a pivotal debate at the MBTA, which is facing a massive budget gap starting July 1 that raises the specter of service cuts without additional state aid.

Of course, when there's money to be distributed, everyone wants a piece, so



Newly reelected House Speaker Ron Mariano addresses the chamber in the State House on Jan. 1, 2025.

Chris Lisinski/SHNS photo

lawmakers are likely to face sustained lobbying efforts and internal debate on the best way to carve up the funding. Having a dedicated pool of money to spend on a handful of pressing issues early in the session could make some springtime budget decisions less painful as Beacon Hill braces for another tight budget year in fiscal 2026.

–CHRIS LISINSKI

Watching the Wallet – Even with relatively low unemployment and state reserves at a historic high, most of Beacon Hill expects fiscal 2026 will be a challenging budget year. Softening non-surtax revenue collections, spending demands inflated by pandemic-era initiatives, and a mountain of uncertainty about the direction of key federal policies all suggest policymakers may need to take a more active role in budget management.

"We're really worried about FY '26," Senate Ways and Means Chair Michael Rodrigues told reporters in December. But even before fiscal 2026 can begin on July 1, the state has to navigate through the second, riskier half of what has been a year of mixed results so far. The budget watchdogs at Mass. Taxpayers Foundation said in December that they do not think Healey will have to make the same kind of midyear budget cuts that she had to last January, but DOR projects that collections will end the year short of the current target so something may have to give.

January collections, which DOR is due to report by Feb. 5, will be especially telling. That month is the start of a crucial six-month period for the state's coffers. Collections are not split evenly across the 12 months and the second half of the fiscal year (January through June) typically produces about 60 percent of the state's annual tax revenue, officials have said. The second half of the budget year also tends to be more volatile for tax collections.

–COLIN A. YOUNG

Family Shelters – The humanitarian and financial crises associated with the state's family shelter system continue to drag into the new year. Funding for the emergency shelters is set to run out in January, and this looming shortfall will likely make appropriations and policy reform one of the first major bills for the new Legislature.

While the concept of rapidly rehousing homeless families makes for a good catchphrase, it has proven difficult to implement. The state is now spending \$1 billion annually on family shelter costs – more than double what it used

to cost – and Gov. Healey has promised to move families out of expensive hotels and motels. She and the lawmakers likely will agree on policies that move the state farther away from the traditional "right to shelter" model, with reforms to the system that guarantee less time in emergency housing for families.

This issue remains a significant political challenge for Democrats, and conservatives are likely gearing up to make the issue central to their opposition campaigns to high-profile figures seeking reelection, like Mayor Wu this year and Healey in 2026, if she chooses to run for governor again.

–SAM DRYSDALE

Milton Zoning Case: Milton's long-running zoning spat with the state over the MBTA Communities Act could reach a resolution in mid-February, or potentially sooner, whenever the Supreme Judicial Court makes its expected decision in the case brought by Attorney General Andrea Campbell in an attempt to force the Boston suburb to comply with a 2021 zoning law.

The town argues that the only consequence the Legislature prescribed for non-compliance is loss of certain state grant eligibility. The AG sued the town almost a year ago, Feb. 27, 2024, for violating the law, which requires 177 communities with or adjacent to MBTA service to allow multi-family zoning by right in some areas, after Milton residents voted to spike a zoning plan that Milton Town Meeting had approved.

The SJC's decision could influence whether other municipalities in eastern Massachusetts choose to embrace or reject denser zoning as required by the law. But the majority of municipalities that have already faced their deadlines to comply with the law have done so. Campbell and top state officials view the law as a key tool for tackling Massachusetts's housing crisis.

–ALISON KUZNITZ

Trump Term Two – Gov. Healey, who as attorney general sued Donald Trump roughly 100 times, seems poised to take a less adversarial approach when the president-elect returns to the White House this month. A day after the election, Healey was no longer on the offensive castigating Trump and seemed markedly somber when telling reporters that she and Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll "will work with anyone to make life better for residents in our state."

Healey has momentarily regained some of her partisan fierceness in television interviews, saying days later that she would "absolutely not" fulfill

a hypothetical request from the Trump administration for Massachusetts State Police to assist with mass deportations. From her perch now in the corner office, Healey needs to strategically weigh how battling Trump could risk Massachusetts losing out on federal funding, a key resource that her administration regularly competes for against other states.

Health and Human Services Secretary Kate Walsh said state officials are focused on working with their federal counterparts, particularly in protecting Medicaid dollars. But Attorney General Andrea Campbell, who may be taking the baton from Healey and going on the offensive, has said she's worried about how the Trump presidency could impact access to reproductive and gender-affirming care — even with the commonwealth's abortion shield law passed in the aftermath of the Dobbs ruling. Campbell has said she plans to review that law and others to ensure they are strong enough to withstand future challenges.

–ALISON KUZNITZ

Legal Injection Sites – Lawmakers have dropped the controversial idea to pursue supervised injection sites in a substance abuse law last year, but supporters are likely to continue to push the policy. With opioid-related deaths declining but still at crisis levels, the Senate embraced the sites, also known as overdose prevention centers, where people can use illegal drugs under the supervision of trained health care workers.

Supporters say they are a life-saving tool to tamp down on the devastating effects of the opioid crisis, which has been exacerbated by the pervasive presence of fentanyl in the drug supply. Opponents note that the sites are illegal under federal law and say they would encourage illegal drug use. The Senate-backed policy died in private opioid bill talks with the House.

Injection sites have the support of Healey's Public Health Commissioner, Robbie Goldstein. Healey hasn't publicly said much about whether she supports the idea, and it remains to be seen whether she or Goldstein will put up more of a fight for them in the new session.

–SAM DRYSDALE

MCAS & Graduation – After voters approved Question 2 to eliminate the MCAS exam graduation requirement, Massachusetts found itself suddenly searching about for a new statewide standard. Healey has made it clear that

A sneak peek at what might top '25's local stories

By BILL FORRY
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

What does the year 2025 have in store for the neighborhoods on the south side of Boston?

As a new, but familiar, and, for many, a menacing administration takes power again in Washington, it's also a mayoral election year in Boston, and while Mayor Wu has not yet drawn a clear challenge, it's expected that there will be at least one candidate who will emerge to counter her campaign to seek a second, four-year term.

Mayoral election years – even if there's not a hotly contested race – can have profound influence at the street-corner level. That's likely to be the case this year again.

Here's a preview from the editors' desk perspective of the stories we think will be frequent topics in The Reporter's pages over the coming months.

A 'reboot' at Carney campus

Two boards appointed mainly by representatives of state and city government are expected to make recommendations in the early part of the new year that could bring sweeping consequences for this part of Boston for decades to come.

The first is a 33-member "working group" charged with setting a course for the re-use of the 10-acre Carney Hospital campus on Dorchester Avenue. The loss of Carney amid the state-facilitated dissolution of Steward Health Care was undoubtedly the top local story of 2024. Carney's demise last September eliminated a critical emergency room option for tens of thousands of people, most of them already underserved and living in zip codes where health disparities are among the most pronounced in the Commonwealth.

Mayor Wu and her chosen lieutenants have been firm in their message that Carney must – and will on her watch – be repurposed for health care services. What those will be, in what model, and how soon they can be restored are all open questions. The "Dorchester working group" – which has now met several times since November – is expected to provide concrete answers to these and other matters before the spring.

It's important to note that the Carney campus is still owned by a Steward-era holding company that has been radio silent about its plans for the site, which is thought to be worth well north of the \$76 million value listed on the city of Boston's assessing site. The Healey administration, which fast-tracked Carney's closure last summer over the objections of other elected leaders, notably did not seek to seize the Carney property by eminent domain – a tactic it did deploy to intervene at Brighton's St. Elizabeth's Medical Center, which is still open and operating.

The working group's recommendations will go to both Gov. Healey and Mayor Wu, but it's really Wu's team that has been most vocal and engaged in triaging the post-Carney plans. How the mayor opts to proceed with the guidance that flows from the working group will be closely watched and critiqued in these pages over the coming weeks.

For Morrissey Boulevard, a path forward – maybe?

A state-authorized commission set up in 2023 to advance plans on how to rebuild and reconfigure Morrissey Boulevard was originally expected to make recommendations to the Legislature by the end of 2024. That timeline has already been extended into the new year, although it remains unclear when precisely such a report will be finalized. In November, the board seemed close to resolving major questions around new intersections and related infrastructure. But residents have continued to raise questions about berms and other barriers near the Savin Hill beaches. The project – once finalized – is expected to cost between \$273 million to \$352 million over a five-year



Two people walked up to a shuttered Carney Hospital in Dorchester on Tuesday, Sept. 3, 2024. What happens next at the Dorchester Avenue campus will be one of the most closely-watched stories of the new year. *Alison Kuznitz/SHNS photo*

period. At this point, work isn't expected to actually begin until 2029. But this year – most stakeholders hope – is the critical moment for coming to a consensus and getting plans in front of lawmakers and the governor for funding.

New eateries will add to Dot's growing marketplace

A flurry of new restaurants are expected to come on line in the new year. The popular Mission Hill café and restaurant Milkweed – owned by the people who used to run The Blarney Stone – are building out a second location on Morrissey Boulevard that should open before the spring.

Sweet Teez Bakery will open in ground-level retail space in the Dot Block complex later this year. Nearby, a Vietnamese-owned and operated events space centered around a cafe called L&G is targeting a '25 opening in what used to be Dorchester Tire on Dot Ave.

Gourmet Kreyol, a Haitian restaurant, is expected to open in Codman Square and El Punto, a large, sit-down Dominican-themed eatery and function hall, is also expected to come online in 2025. We'll also be tracking new liquor licenses for several existing businesses in Dorchester and Mattapan, which have been made available through state law passed in 2024. City officials expect the first round of new licenses to be awarded by the end of March.

Blue Hill Avenue

City planners, their efforts fueled by an infusion of federal grant dollars, continue to map out a reconfiguration for Blue Hill Avenue that currently includes a new center-running bus lane. The center-bus concept has drawn fierce opposition from many residents and merchants who worry that dropping vehicle lanes will add to congestion woes and hurt small businesses along the thoroughfare. Advocates say the new design will ease commutes for the tens of thousands riding

buses each day. Construction isn't expected until 2026, but this year will almost surely bring clarity – if not consensus – to the final design.

City council contests?

A mayoral contest – if there is one – will take center stage. But city councillors will also be on the ballot in 2025. Council President Ruthzee Louijeune, who topped the ticket in '23 – is a favorite to once again lead the pack among citywide vote-getters. But she will have to relinquish her president's gavel at the end of the year. Who might take the presidency next will be a later-in-the-year dynamic.

Meantime, a new crop of potential candidates will likely take shape between now and the filing deadline in May. One district seat that will be closely watched is District 7, where the incumbent Tania Fernandes-Anderson now stands accused in federal court of an alleged kick-back scheme. She has refused to step down from her seat but has already drawn two likely challengers in the fall election.

Uncertain impacts from immigration crackdowns

The manner and speed with which the Trump administration follows through with its pledge to deport millions of people now living in the United States is a huge wildcard locally. If, as threatened, the feds seek to expel people who were granted asylum and protected status under previous administrations, there could be major disruptions in communities like Dorchester and Mattapan. Much could depend on the degree to which local authorities cooperate with any presidential orders are issued in the coming weeks.

In the last Trump regime, former Mayor Marty Walsh used Washington's more aggressive policies aimed at migrants as an effective political foil that boosted his standing locally. Could we see a similar dynamic play out in this year's contest? Stay tuned.

What to watch for on Beacon Hill this year

(Continued from page 10)

she wants a uniform graduation model that ensures equity across districts, and that she plans to bring together stakeholders this year to come up with a solution that abides by the vote law.

Education Committee Co-Chair Sen. Jason Lewis said he plans to file a bill requiring MassCore completion for all students, which would mandate a certain curriculum, as an alternative to the exam requirement that voters scrapped. Critics argue that such a move will have to be coupled with strong oversight to ensure equity across districts, and it would require additional funding from the state, as some schools lack the resources to fully implement MassCore.

Some business groups that opposed the ballot question say they'll try to convince leaders that the current MCAS system should stay in place until an alternative can be set up, though the Massachusetts Teachers Association, which financially backed Question 2, says that's out of the question. As the state works on a replacement, there is pressure on districts to certify that students are meeting the statewide competency requirements to earn diplomas.

–SAM DRYSDALE

Mayoral Elections – If history is any guide, at least some lawmakers from the 33 cities that will vote for mayor in 2025 will think about throwing their hats into the ring (especially

knowing they would not have to give up their legislative seats unless they win). Mayor Wu's reelection effort in Boston headlines the pack, but four-year terms are also on the ballot in Easthampton, Everett, Framingham, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lynn, Newburyport, Newton, Northampton, Salem, and West Springfield.

–COLIN A. YOUNG

2026 Statewide Elections – It takes name recognition, time, and money to build a statewide following and any candidate hoping to win one of the six constitutional offices up for grabs in 2026 will need to start early. Gov. Healey hasn't said if she will run for a second term (in December she said that she would start thinking about that

possibility at some point this year). Be on the lookout for a potential primary opponent for Auditor Diana DiZoglio, whose push for more accountability from the Legislature has rankled insiders in the General Court.

Congressman Joseph Kennedy III didn't shy away from a challenge in 2020 when he tried, unsuccessfully, to unseat US Sen. Ed Markey. Other officeholders must decide whether they will take a run at Markey in 2026, and some of the more veteran members of the state's Congressional delegation will also need to decide whether to keep going, or call it quits.

–MICHAEL P. NORTON

Morrissey developer tells civic group he'll honor \$750k pledge

(Continued from page 1) a poor reputation for years and deservedly so. There's been too many projects that were shoved down the community's throat, that were menaces during construction, and then the developer finishes and hops back on a plane to New York. That's not how we do things."

Flynn noted his personal connections to the neighborhood. Both of his grandmothers, he said, grew up in Dorchester, and he attended BC High and spent a great

deal of time in Savin Hill as a student and now as an adult visiting friends or eating at Lambert's or McKenna's Café.

"I don't say these things to boost my *bona fides* or act like I know something," he said. "It's because these really are my favorite places."

Bob Scannell, the CEO and president of BGCD, attended the meeting to meet Flynn. Don Walsh, a longtime civic leader who chairs the civic group's Benefits Committee, said attorneys representing the three parties

would begin work soon to out the details of the contribution. Any final agreement would need approval of the City of Boston, he said.

"We're really happy they are moving forward with it," said Walsh. "It's more than spending the money but spending it wisely for the community's benefit and for our benefit. What is good for us is going to be good for them."

Flynn told civic members that the development team intends to adhere to a Master Plan

developed and approved by the Boston Planning Dept. (formerly the BPDA) in 2023.

"There was a ton of thought put into it," he said. "We hold that in high regard and intend to comply with the Master Plan."

He noted that as a developer he acknowledges that there is a housing crisis, and that density is necessary, but he doesn't believe the established residential neighborhoods are the place for density. That's what was attractive about the Morrissey Boulevard site, he said.

"We want to be responsible," he said. "You can't put a mid-rise or high-rise building in this part of the neighborhood. I think 75 Morrissey Boulevard is the right place for that density, but it's not all on this area of the Columbia-Savin

Hill neighborhood to alleviate the city's housing crisis...It's about doing it in the right way and not putting the density square in the middle of the neighborhood."

Walsh noted that there is no timeline as to when the donation will be made. The association is determined to start its own planning effort for the Glover's Corner area on the edge of their group's catchment area, where there are some 20 acres of underutilized land.

After two-year city-led planning effort made some headway on planning for the area, the city abandoned the effort last year. The association has discussed using some of the \$750,000 to pay a consultant to lead its effort.

"It's all coming together," said Walsh. "I invite all of the civic association members and individuals



Copper Mill CEO Andrew Flynn attended the Columbia-Savin Hill Civic Association on Monday night to introduce himself and his team to the community as the new developer of 35-75 Morrissey Blvd.

Seth Daniel photo

to think about the best way to use \$750,000 for the greatest benefit for the community."

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New captain takes charge at C-11

(Continued from page 1) suggestions. While there, he also confronted the drug and homelessness problems at Mass. and Cass, and as they spread farther into the South End.

Some neighbors used the occasion to bring up the conduct of officers working details at the

many construction sites throughout Savin Hill.

"I've noted some not in uniform, in hoodies, and not professional; we'll address that," he said.

Area C-11 is one of four BPD districts that include parts of Dorchester. C-11's geography includes Fields Corner, where the police sta-

tion is located, along with most sections of Dorchester west of Washington Street and north to Columbia Road. Other districts with sections of Dorchester include B-3, which also includes Mattapan; C-6 that is centered in South Boston; and B-2, which includes Roxbury.

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Dot native tracks the time when synagogues flourished in Boston

(Continued from page 1)

and attended the Christopher Gibson School. But after a few unfortunate incidents targeting his brother, he said, the family moved to Grove Hall's Hartwell Street and attended the large Mishkan Tifla Synagogue on Seaver Street. His father operated a jewelry store on Tremont Street downtown.

As more and more Jewish families left the city in the late 1960s during a period marred by a deliberate strategy by lenders and political leaders to "redline" Boston's neighborhoods along ethnic and racial lines, the Calish family moved to Randolph, where Jeff attended high school and later studied information technology in college before he and his wife returned to Dorchester's Ashmont Hill, where they raised two daughters.

His daily travels from there often brought him in contact with the places he knew well from his childhood days. Many of the modern-day Black congregations that now own former synagogue buildings have kept the exteriors largely intact – with markers that identify them as Jewish houses of worship.

Calish was always curious about the wider history of Jews in Boston, and it was the onset of the pandemic that afforded him the opportunity to dig deeper. "When it hit, I needed something to do and I started researching," he said. "I was just fascinated with all the information."

Some of the prominent Jewish Bostonians he highlights include Leonard Nimoy, famous for his role as 'Spock' on Star Trek. The Nimoy family operated a barber shop at the corner of Morton Street and Blue Hill Avenue. The actor was fascinated, Calish said, by some of the ceremonies and rituals in the Jewish temples and took the "live long and prosper" sign directly from Jewish ceremonies. The famous composer and director Leonard Bernstein and the journalist Theodore White were other well-known Jewish men with roots in Boston's neighborhoods.

In his history, Calish traces the Jewish settlement in Boston to the 1800s and notes that the population was very small compared to cities like St. Louis, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Louisville.

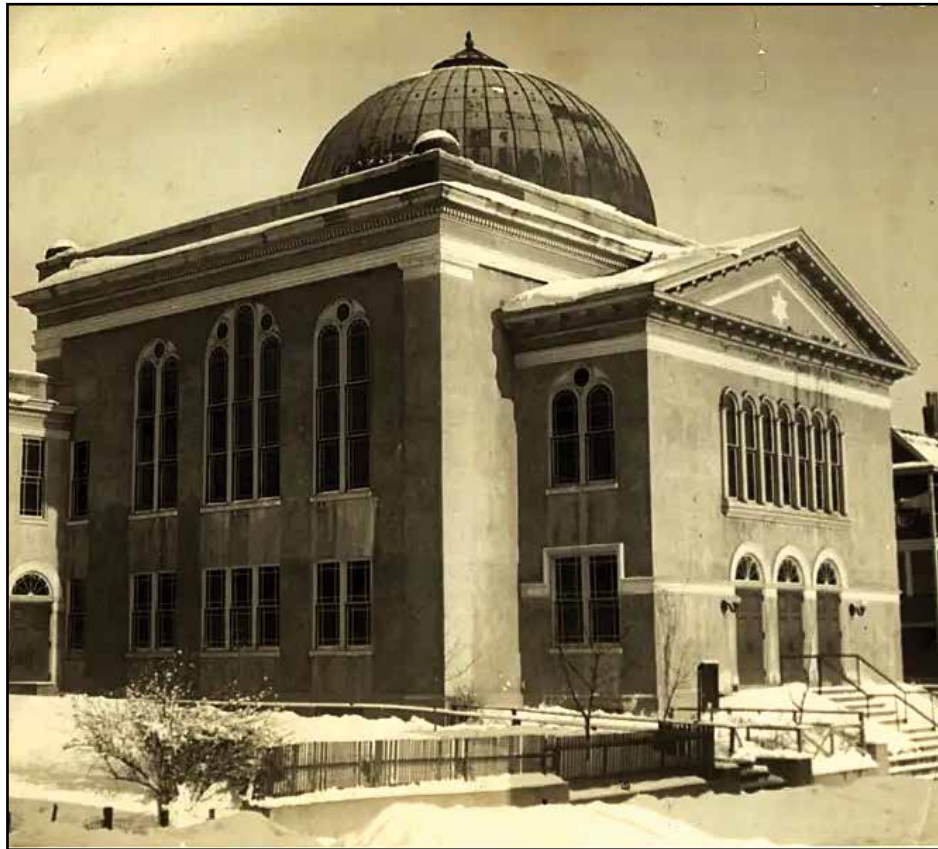
The first synagogues were located in the North End and South End in the early 1800s, yet the overall population was only 1,000 in the 1860s at the time of the Civil War. But in the later decades, as Jewish populations in eastern and central Europe faced persecution, more Jewish individuals and moved to Boston – and eventually, Dorchester, then Mattapan.

This influx built synagogues and other cultural institutions all over the area, with 22 logged in Dorchester and 6 in Mattapan and another 30 in Roxbury, mostly on the Dorchester line in Grove Hall. By 1950, he says, the Jewish population in Dorchester, Roxbury and Mattapan was put at about 70,000.

Much of the synagogue history was lost, he points out, because the Jewish population left so quickly, but also because congregants were not allowed to take pictures or write notes on the Sabbath.

"People had no cameras, did not take notes or record their history or the things that happened, and so there isn't much history about them," he said. "When they had services, there were no notes taken because they couldn't. For conservative and orthodox congregations, on the Sabbath one major rule is you cannot use energy to create anything."

Restrictions like that played into a theme of synagogue expansion. Many congregations would build large buildings and attract large populations, but because observant Jews weren't



Temple Beth El was a striking building located along Fowler Avenue just south of Franklin Park. The congregation left in the 1960s, and the building was demolished in 1997. The site is now a vacant lot. Photo courtesy DHS.



The former Congregation Hadrath Israel building, once known as the Lithuanian Shul, is now the Friendly Church of Christ. Seth Daniel photo



Leonard Nimoy, Star Trek's "Spock," with his sisters pictured in front of their family's barbershop at 1186 Blue Hill Ave. in Mattapan. The address is now home to Hair It Is Barbers. Photo courtesy Jeff Calish

allowed to drive cars on the Sabbath, their homes so they wouldn't have to their requested smaller 'shuls' near walk so far.

Congregations that met first in a rabbi's home grew larger – and required additions, which is why many former synagogues were in what appear to be homes. A common addition was a separate entrance for women, which kept them out of the rabbi's home and separated from men during services.

This feature is prominently observed at the current St. Luke's AME Zion Church at 1099 Blue Hill Ave., which once housed the Young Israel of Mattapan congregation.

Some synagogues were formed around native countries – Russia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Poland et al. – while others formed around ethnicities – Sephardic (Spanish) Jews, or Ashkenazi (European) Jews.

This was prominent in the clusters of congregations on Lawrence Avenue and Intervale Street in Dorchester, as well as on Woodrow Avenue near the Mattapan-Dorchester line.

Congregation Hadrath Israel (now the Faithful Church of Christ) was known as the Lithuanian Shul, while across the street, the Agudas Israel Anshe Sfard (now Temple Salem Seventh Day Adventist) was known as the Russian Shul.

"I was most surprised about all of the activity on Woodrow Avenue," said Calish.

There were also simple disagreements, he said, which was on display at Woodrow Avenue when the Beth Aknosis Paoli Anshe Sephardic formed as a breakaway from the Russian Shul.

"From my research, a lot of the synagogues were formed because people were upset over a new rabbi or who became the cantor or something else like that," he said. "You aren't tied to any congregation, and you can do what you want. It's not like the Catholic Church where you're in a geographic parish."

Calish points out that one of the oldest congregations in the region set itself up on Dakota Street, in what is now a Haitian evangelical church. The one-story building housed Mishkan Israel, a conservative synagogue founded in 1858 by Polish immigrants. It was first on Westville Street, then moved to 480 Geneva Ave. In 1930, they opened the building at 137 Dakota St.

The congregation dissolved in 1977 but the synagogue building is the oldest of those still standing in the Dorchester, Roxbury, and Mattapan area.

A non-religious structure – but very important to the Jewish population of that time – was the rock wall at Franklin Field along Blue Hill Avenue. During the high holidays of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, it was the spot to be.

"On the high holidays, services would go on continuously, but there was a break, and a lot of people gathered on the wall at Franklin Field," he said. "Young groups from all over, every congregation, in jackets and ties – hundreds of us – would be there hanging out."

Of course, there are hundreds of other such historical notes, and Calish said he would like to share all he's learned by staging more presentations and lectures across the community.

"I think it's part of the history of the community and the large Jewish community is gone," he said. "A lot of young people don't know much about it and a lot of people who are older see my presentation and remember going to these places – recalling they had their bar mitzvah or other big moments at some of these buildings."

Calish can be reached for questions or to request his presentation at jealish@hotmail.com.

For more in-depth studies about this subject, visit the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston at jsgsb.org.

Big December puts state tax revenues back on plus track

BY COLIN A. YOUNG
STATE HOUSE
NEWS SERVICE

A solid December for tax revenue collections pushed the state from 0.8 percent behind the Healey administration's expectations to 0.8 percent ahead at the half-way point of fiscal year 2025, though the positive budget news came with a small caveat.

The Department of Revenue reported on Monday that it raked in \$4.345 billion last month, which was \$573 million or 15.2 percent more what was collected in December 2023 and \$267 million or 6.5 percent above the administration's monthly benchmark of \$4.078 billion. Through six months of fiscal 2025, DOR said it has collected \$19.26 billion - \$1.394 billion, or 7.8 percent, more than

actual collections from the same period of fiscal 2024, and \$159 million, or 0.8 percent, greater than the year-to-date benchmark.

DOR considers December a significant month for revenues because many corporations and businesses are required to make quarterly estimated payments during the month. Plus, some of the quarterly personal income tax estimated payments that are due by Jan. 15 come in during December. The month has historically generated 9.5 percent of annual tax revenue, DOR said.

Revenue Commissioner Geoffrey Snyder said that December 2024's receipts showed increases from December 2023 collections in non-withheld income tax, sales tax, corporate and business tax, and the 'all other tax' category.

"The increase in non-withholding income tax is due, in part, to a likely increase in surtax revenue and the pass-through entity excise, and the impact of a tax amnesty program administered by DOR from Nov. 1 to Dec. 30, 2024," Snyder said. "The increase in sales tax is partly due to typical timing factors in collections and the amnesty program. The increase in 'all other tax' is due to an increase in estate tax, a category that tends to fluctuate. The increase in corporate and business tax is primarily the result of higher corporate return payments."

DOR qualified its announcement of December collections, estimating that \$197 million of the \$573 million year-over-year increase actually reflects "one-time events in withholding and estate

taxes, without which December 2024 revenue would be about \$376 million or 10.0 percent more than actual collections in December 2023 and \$70 million above the December benchmark." If not for those one-time payments, DOR said Massachusetts would actually be \$38 million or 0.2 percent below benchmark at the half-way point of fiscal 2025.

While spending data is not available on the same monthly schedule as tax revenues, the costs of running a maxed-out emergency family shelter system are. The governor on Monday filed a supplemental budget seeking to implement a series of reforms for the system, with an eye toward wrestling costs back down to the neighborhood of \$350 million to \$400 million from the roughly \$1 billion annual

price tag for the shelter system this year and last.

For fiscal 2025, lawmakers have so far approved a combined half-billion dollars between direct appropriations and available one-time funds, but the administration's latest report to lawmakers estimated that total fiscal 2025 shelter costs will actually be \$1.018 billion, necessitating the supplemental budget.

Administration and Finance Secretary Matthew Gorkowicz has said the system is on track to run out of funds this month, and the administration requested \$425 million in additional spending on Monday.

The budget watchdogs at Mass. Taxpayers Foundation said in December that they do not think Healey will have to make the same kind of midyear budget cuts

she did last January, but DOR recently projected that collections will end the year short of the current target.

January collections, which DOR is due to report by Feb. 5, will be especially telling. That month is the start of a crucial six-month period for the state's coffers and the administration is expecting \$3.694 billion to be collected during the month, \$100 million more than came in last January.

Collections are not split evenly across the 12 months and the second half of the fiscal year (January through June) typically produces about 60 percent of the state's annual tax revenue, officials have said. The second half of the budget year also tends to be more volatile for tax collections.



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Buyer	Seller	Address	Date	Price	
Abbas, Hamza	Sullivan, Duane G	60 Elmont St	Dorchester	12/20/24	\$810,000
Wood, Christine	Ransford, M R	1241-1251 Adams St #PM306	Dorchester	12/18/24	670,000
Lopes, Mauricio	Marshall, Glenn	10 Centerville Park	Dorchester	12/20/24	1,002,000
Murray, Jamie	Besson, Nalida L	8 Colonial Ave	Dorchester	12/18/24	890,000
Mungo, Timmea C	Smalls, Ellis	82 Whitfield St	Dorchester	12/20/24	1,200,000
Ryan, Molly	Bohara, Margaret	10 Elm Lawn St	Dorchester	12/16/24	1,165,000
Quinfield LLC	Downs Grace E Est	22 Allston St	Dorchester	12/18/24	575,000
31 Edson LLC	Lavin, Peter	31 Edson St	Dorchester	12/19/24	780,000
Top Notch Transitional Sv	Rudowski, Zofia M	10 Grant St	Dorchester	12/19/24	458,974
Abbas, Hamza	Sullivan, Duane G	64-66 Elmont St	Dorchester	12/20/24	810,000
Ejk Rt	Db Development LLC	53 Maxwell St	Dorchester	12/20/24	2,000,000
Ejk Rt	Db Development LLC	55 Maxwell St	Dorchester	12/20/24	2,000,000
Aryee, Aaron	Farragher, John T	53 Stockton St	Dorchester	12/20/24	935,000
Oregan, Daniel	Octavio F Miranda Irt	9 Holden St	Dorchester	12/19/24	1,616,000
Inglis, Ashleigh	Silva, Caroline	22 Humes Rd	Dorchester	12/19/24	898,000
Kelly, Madison L	Opila, Lester	49 Saint Margaret St	Dorchester	12/19/24	1,050,000
Brown, David	Tyler, Renee L	42 Idaho St	Mattapan	12/17/24	850,000
Paul, Kristopher	SI24 Investments LLC	93 W Selden St	Mattapan	12/18/24	975,000
Grant, Tatiana	Fripp Eara L Est	32 Halborn St	Mattapan	12/19/24	545,000
Elusme, Letesee J	Kebreau, Marie	29-31 Regis Rd	Mattapan	12/18/24	1,050,000
760 Cummins LLC	Helge Cummins LLC	760 Cummins Hwy	Mattapan	12/19/24	9,350,000
Desruisseaux, Sarah-Angie	140 Minden LLC	515 Norfolk St	Mattapan	12/20/24	1,485,000
Curran, Michael P	Xavier, Patricia A	52 Hillside St #1	Dorchester	12/20/24	500,000
Barnes, Colin	Duggan, Corey P	1241-1251 Adams St #B103	Dorchester	12/20/24	335,748
Johnson, Darrell B	Skybridge Properties LLC	25 Brinsley St #2	Dorchester	12/16/24	475,000
Schrom, Steven	183 Fuller Street LLC	183 Fuller St #1	Dorchester	12/18/24	799,000
64 Nelson LLC	Dromerlin Rt	31 Nelson St	Dorchester	12/19/24	399,000
Kuo, Jung C	Amaro, Jose	11 Water St #1	Dorchester	12/19/24	450,000

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Judge reduces some damages for sober house operator who demanded sex from his tenants

BY REPORTER STAFF

A federal magistrate judge agreed last month that a Dorchester man acted reprehensibly in demanding sex and nude photos from women who moved into one of his “sober houses” in attempts to get clean and should pay damages to the people he targeted.

But the judge also ruled that Peter McCarthy should pay far less than the \$3.8 million that a jury had awarded earlier as damages for his violation of the federal Fair Housing Act.

In his ruling, US District Court Magistrate Judge Donald Cabell reduced the total amount McCarthy has to pay the women in compensatory and punitive damages to \$1.42 million.

In the case of a woman who fled one of McCarthy’s Steps to Solutions houses after just one day, Cabell acknowledged that the way McCarthy “demanded oral sex as payment and threatened to call her probation officer if she refused” was “undoubtedly egregious and impactful, particularly where it contributed to [her] relapse.”

But he also said that just one day in one of his houses was “in context remarkably brief and involved no physical contact” and so he reduced the jury’s total award to her from \$1.2 million to \$150,000.

In a follow-up ruling last Friday, Cabell gave the US Attorney’s office in Boston, which had sued McCarthy in 2021 on behalf of seven of his former tenants, ten days to decide whether to accept his reduction or to seek a new trial to try to uphold the original jury amounts.

He also rejected the government’s request that he order McCarthy to hire an independent company to run his sober houses going forward while granting an injunction under which McCarthy has to swear he will stop “discriminating against others based on sex, which includes coercing, intimidating, threatening, or interfering with housing rights” in violation of the Fair Housing Act.

The government had also sued on behalf of a male tenant – who testified that his girlfriend would have sex with McCarthy to keep him from turning in her boyfriend whenever he relapsed – charging that federal housing law makes it illegal to discriminate against tenants on the basis of gender, or to demand sexual favors in return for housing.

Unlike halfway houses, where people are trying to recover from substance abuse, sober homes have little government regulation. McCarthy ran sober homes in Dorchester,

Roxbury and Lynn.

A jury found in favor of the tenants in May and awarded them varying amounts of compensation based on their testimony. McCarthy appealed the verdicts and the amounts – and said he should not be asked to pay more than \$450,000 in damages.

In his ruling reducing the amounts, Cabell detailed his reasoning for each of the seven former tenants, two of which follow.

One of the women said that she stayed at one of McCarthy’s houses for three days in 2009 and then two months in 2013: “She testified that McCarthy in 2019 required her to perform oral sex in exchange for the brief time she was there, and in 2013 negotiated an arrangement involving at least one encounter of sexual intercourse each month in lieu of paying rent. [The woman] testified that they had sex according to this arrangement multiple times, which caused her emotional distress. She also stated that she relapsed after she left in 2013, although she was abusing substances before she entered the home. The jury awarded [the woman] \$300,000 in compensatory damages and \$875,000 in punitive damages.

“The court leaves the compensatory damages award as it is but will reduce the punitive damages award. Viewing the statutory damages scheme as instructive (but not controlling) and viewing the conduct here as evincing repeated violations of the FHA, McCarthy reasonably was on notice that his conduct could result in penalties of up to \$150,000. Given the reprehensibility of his conduct – extorting sex on multiple occasions – an award double that amount, and equal to the amount of compensatory damages, is justified. In sum, the court declines to modify the \$300,000

award of compensatory damages but reduces the punitive damages award to \$300,000 as well, for a total of \$600,000.”

The “statutory damages scheme” the judge referenced involves the \$50,000 maximum penalty courts can levy as compensatory damage for a first violation of the housing law, and up to \$100,000 for subsequent violations.

Another woman lived in one of McCarthy’s houses between May and September 2021:

“She testified that McCarthy frequently made comments about her body and made her uncomfortable. He placed his hand on her thigh and her buttocks on two different occasions and solicited sexually explicit pictures (which she never sent).

“[She] left the home in response to this conduct and never retrieved or was returned her personal belongings. The jury

awarded her \$115,000 in compensatory damages and \$125,000 in punitive damages.

“The court leaves the compensatory damages untouched. The award arguably is high but does not ‘exceed any rational appraisal or estimate of the damages that could be based upon the evidence before it.’ Along with testimony evincing emo-

tional distress, the jury could have considered the economic loss [she] suffered on account of her unreturned belongings.

“The punitive damages award of \$125,000, however, will be reduced to \$60,000. McCarthy’s conduct was, to be sure, reprehensible where the evidence showed he subjected [the woman] to unwelcome physical contact and solicited sexually explicit pictures. That said, there was no evidence that [the woman] was financially vulner-

able, or that McCarthy demanded these favors in exchange for [her] continued tenancy, or that his conduct evinced “intentional malice, trickery, or deceit.” Further, an award of \$60,000 is more in line with the amount of damages that would be imposed for a violation of the statute. For these reasons, the court leaves untouched the compensatory damages award of \$115,000 but reduces the punitive damages award to \$60,000, for a total of \$175,000.”

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LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE & FAMILY COURT SUFFOLK PROBATE & FAMILY COURT 24 NEW CHARDON STREET BOSTON, MA 02114 CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, §5-304 Docket No. SU24P2796GD IN THE MATTER OF: MELINA WILLIAMS of DORCHESTER, MA RESPONDENT

Alleged Incapacitated Person To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center of Boston, MA in the above captioned matter alleging that Melina Williams is in need of a Guardian and requesting that Alenia Sammy of Brooklyn, NY (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve Without Surety on the bond.

The petition asks the Court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of 01/28/2025. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person’s right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense. Witness, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court.

Stephanie L. Everett, Esq. Register of Probate Date: December 31, 2024 Published: January 9, 2025

LEGAL NOTICES

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT Suffolk Probate & Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114 (617) 788-8300 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION Docket No. SU24P2738EA ESTATE OF: RAMONA J. COX DATE OF DEATH: 07/20/2024

To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Cecil C. Cox of Lexington, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: Cecil C. Cox of Lexington, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 01/30/2025.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

Witness, HON. BRIAN J. DUNN, First Justice of this Court. Date: December 19, 2024 Stephanie L. Everett, Esq. Register of Probate Published: January 9, 2025

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE & FAMILY COURT Suffolk Probate & Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114 (617) 788-8300 Docket No. SU24A0993AD CITATION G.L. c. 210, §6 IN THE MATTER OF: NAKARI STORM BYRON-ARTIS

To: Valerie Elisa Artis, any unnamed or unknown parent and persons interested in a petition for the adoption of said child and to the Department of Children and Families of said Commonwealth.

A petition has been presented to said court by: Janelle Jaqueta Byron of Boston, MA requesting for leave to adopt said child and that the name of the child be changed to Nakari Storm Byron.

If you object to this adoption you are entitled to the appointment of an attorney if you are an indigent person.

An indigent person is defined by SJC Rule 3:10. The definition includes but is not limited to persons receiving TAFDC, EACDC, poverty related veteran’s benefits, Medicaid, and SSI. The Court will determine if you are indigent. Contact an Assistant Judicial Case Manager or Adoption Clerk of the Court on or before the date listed below to obtain the necessary forms.

If you desire to object thereto, you or your attorney must file a written appearance in said court at: Boston (10:00 AM) on: 02/17/2025.

Witness, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court. Date: December 17, 2024 Stephanie L. Everett, Esq. Register of Probate Published: December 26, 2024 January 2, 2025, January 9, 2025

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT Suffolk Probate & Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114 (617) 788-8300 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION Docket No. SU24P2723EA ESTATE OF: ARTHUR JEROME PORTER a/k/a: ARTHUR J. PORTER, ARTHUR PORTER DATE OF DEATH: 02/09/2024

To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Jacquelin Maskell of Hanson, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: Jacquelin Maskell of Hanson, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 01/29/2025.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

Witness, HON. BRIAN J. DUNN, First Justice of this Court. Date: December 18, 2024 Stephanie L. Everett, Esq. Register of Probate Published: January 9, 2025

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE & FAMILY COURT SUFFOLK DIVISION 24 NEW CHARDON STREET BOSTON, MA 02114 Docket No. SU24D2386DR DIVORCE SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION and MAILING LATRICIA ANN CARTER vs. GARFIELD DEAN TAYLOR

To the Defendant:

The Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for Divorce requesting that the Court grant a divorce for Irretrievable Breakdown. Any other relief that this Court deems proper and just. The Complaint is on file at the Court. An Automatic Restraining Order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any action which would negatively impact the current financial status of either party. SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411.

You are hereby summoned and required to serve upon: Latricia Ann Carter, 159 Fuller St., Boston, MA 02124 your answer, if any, on or before 02/27/2025. If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are also required to file a copy of your answer, if any, in the office of the Register of this Court.

Witness, HON. BRIAN J. DUNN, First Justice of this Court. Date: December 26, 2024 Stephanie L. Everett, Esq. Register of Probate Published: January 9, 2025



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As Boston hails its first-time homeowners, new report finds doubling of housing costs

By SVYATOSLAV YUSHCHYSHYN

Last month, as Mayor Wu and city officials met with dozens of people who were able to become first-time homeowners in Boston by receiving financial assistance from the city, she said, “I’m thrilled to celebrate these new homeowners and the transformative impact of the City of Boston’s home buying programs in building generational wealth and equity across our city.”

Throughout Wu’s administration, 678 people, a majority of whom are people of color, became homeowners for the first time because of the city’s programs, including 235 families in 2024 alone.

Dorchester was the busiest neighborhood where buyers decided to close on a new home this year. Roxbury, Hyde Park, and Mattapan were also popular areas for new owners.

The First-Time Homebuyer Program is the city’s flagship initiative. It provides eligible buyers a grant of 5 percent of the purchase price, up to \$50,000, toward a down payment. Since 2022, the program has provided over \$16.8 million in support to those 678 families, according to Alexander Sturke, a spokesperson in the May-

or’s Office of Housing. The assistance was previously only 1.5% of the housing cost, and it was given as a deferred loan, not a grant. The changes, said Sturke, have “increased equity and security” for new buyers.

ONE+Boston is another program aimed at making homeownership a reality for more residents. In addition to providing down payment assistance, it offers access to discounted, fixed 30-year mortgage rates. To be eligible, residents must meet a list of requirements, including being below an income limit, which was \$163,200 for a family of four. A total of 481 people have benefited from ONE+Boston, said Sturke.

However, across the backdrop of these celebrations lies a stark reality: the cost of owning a home in Boston has soared in the past five years, as home prices and mortgage rates have significantly risen, according to a new report by Oxford Economics, an economic advisory firm.

In 2019, a household needed an annual income of about \$104,000 to buy the median priced single-family home in the city. Today, a family needs roughly \$194,000 to afford to buy the same

home, an increase of 86 percent.

The analysis not only took into account the price of houses but also the cost of property taxes and homeowners’ insurance to calculate the salary necessary for housing costs.

The report also ranked Boston as the 11th least affordable metro in the country, with San Jose being the least affordable. The average family needs an annual salary of \$108,000 to buy a home in the country, which is almost half of the income required to own a home in Boston.

In the third quarter of 2019, about 46 percent of families could afford the median housing costs in the city, the report estimated. The drop has been dramatic over the past five years. The report estimated that only about a quarter of households now earn the income required to afford a home within the city.

The main driver of eroding affordability across the country, according to the report, is high mortgage rates. Over the last five years, they have nearly doubled, from 3.7 percent to 6.5 percent. Although property taxes, housing insurance, and house prices all increased, mortgage rates rose disproportionately higher

than the other factors.

Barbara Denham, the report’s lead economists, explained that housing costs will not improve until mortgage rates “fall appreciably.”

Sturke, the Housing Office spokesperson, added that limited available land and high construction costs also drive up prices for first-time buyers. The report’s findings, he said, “underscore the need for policies that both increase the supply of housing and make it more affordable to households with a range of incomes.”

Gustavo Quiroga, executive director of LISC Massachusetts, which supports community development initiatives in the state, agreed that there’s a lack of housing, but he emphasized that sale prices are driven up mainly by a shortage of

homes available for sale. “Most new housing built in Boston is rental apartments,” Quiroga said.

Many of the ways to address the issue are related to changing zoning regulations, believes Quiroga, so that it’s possible to build more homes in all neighborhoods.

For an example, Quiroga suggested that the mayor implement new zoning to allow more housing within the Main Street business districts. It would “create more housing that people working in our local businesses can easily access and add more customers within walking distances to those businesses,” he said.

Another proposal was recommended by the Boston Foundation in its annual housing report on the Boston area. Their findings showed that if 5 percent of the region’s public, vacant, and non-conservation land was developed, then it could accommodate

85,000 units of housing. In a statement, Ted McEnroe, the organization’s spokesperson, said, “The best way to improve homeowner affordability in Greater Boston is to build hundreds of thousands of new homes so that demand doesn’t continue to far outpace supply.”

He added, “The ongoing efforts to increase supply and reform zoning will take years to yield results. In the meantime, programs like state and city down-payment assistance are proving effective at giving first-generation homebuyers broader opportunities to buy in today’s out-of-balance market.”

The Oxford Economics report on housing affordability concluded with a forecast. It estimated that housing costs will “rise moderately again” in the first three months of 2025, pushing homeownership further out of reach of residents.

Ironworkers pitch in to help at Rosie’s Place

Just before the holidays, Ironworkers Local 7 members visited Rosie’s Place in Boston’s South End with boxes of donated coats, hats, gloves, and other winter items for those living at the country’s first shelter for women.

“Local 7 works in the community every day and our members take great pride in helping others meet their needs, especially during the holidays,” said Vinny Coyle, Local 7’s business manager.

Coyle visited 889 Harrison Ave and was joined by Local 7 President Frank Murray as well as members Dave Donovan, Bridget Nee-Walsh, Derek Echols, Shari Almedia, Rae Jackson, and Jillisa Durant.

Kelsey Soto, Rosie’s Place community partnership manager, welcomed the group to the multiservice community center. In addition to providing women with shelter and meals, Rosie’s Place offers ESOL classes, legal assistance, wellness care, one-on-one support,



Local 7 members ventured from Southie to the South End to donate winter gear to residents at Rosie’s Place. Back row left to right: Dave Donovan, Bridget Nee-Walsh, Local 7 Business Manager Vincent Coyle Jr., Derek Echols, Shari Almedia. Front row left to right: Rae Jackson, Jillisa Durant, Kelsey Soto (Rosie’s Place), Local 7 President Frank Murray. Courtesy photo

housing and job search services, and community outreach.

Since the shelter does not accept any city, state, or federal funding, it relies entirely on the support of individuals, foundations, and institutions like Local 7.

Coyle added, “With

frigid weather upon us, we are proud to do our part to help women and families in need in Greater Boston, especially those who are struggling during the holiday season.”

To give to Rosie’s Place visit rosiesplace.org/ways-to-give.

—CASSIDY McNEELEY

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WRA-5583	Purchase of Two (2) New Diesel-Powered Trucks with Interchangeable Bodies	01/22/25	2:00 p.m.
WRA-5584	Purchase of Two (2) New Trailer Mounted Light Towers	01/22/25	2:00 p.m.
WRA-5585	Purchase of Two (2) New Hydraulic Excavators with Buckets	01/22/25	2:00 p.m.
WRA-5569	Purchase of Victaulic Pipe and Tees	01/23/25	3:00 p.m.
A644	RFQ/P Workers’ Compensation Litigation Services	02/05/25	11:00 a.m.

To access and bid on Event(s) please go to the MWRA Supplier Portal at <https://supplier.mwra.com>



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF DORCHESTER



Wishing You a Happy New Year! See details below.



BGCD Fine Arts & Music Programs Host Winter Arts Bash for Families: See details below.

CONNECT THE DOT:
Wishing You a Happy New Year!
 As we welcome a new year, BGCD extends our gratitude to the incredible community that surrounds and supports us everyday. For over 50 years, your commitment has helped us provide a safe, inclusive, and inspiring space for thousands of young people to learn, grow, and thrive. From attending events to volunteering time, making generous donations, or simply spreading the word, your contributions make an extraordinary impact every day. Looking ahead, we're filled with excitement and determination to continue making a difference in 2025. With your ongoing support, we aim to expand our programs, strengthen initiatives, and provide new opportunities for every child who walks through our doors. On behalf of our staff, Board of Directors, and most importantly the youth we serve, we wish you a joyful and healthy New Year!

FIND OUT WHAT'S INSIDE:
BGCD Fine Arts & Music Programs Host Winter Arts Bash for Families:
 Our Fine Arts & Music programs at Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester came together in December to host the quarterly Arts Bash to celebrate all our members have learned and accomplished throughout the fall. At the event there were inspiring displays of members' artwork created within the enrichment programs, a melodic performance by a trio of members in the Music Lesson program, a fabulous Fashion Show and several exciting performances by members taking part in Puppet Making. Thanks to all the parents and members who attended. For information on the upcoming series of classes in the Fine Arts Program please contact Katy Sullivan at kfarrar@bgcdorchester.org, while Music Program inquiries can be directed to Carleton Burke at cburke@bgcdorchester.org.

DID YOU KNOW:
BGCD Young Professionals Board & Lower Mills Tavern to Host "Tavern Takeover" Event - January 30th:
 Join Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester's Young Professionals Board and Lower Mills Tavern for the Tavern Takeover! On January 30th from 7 - 10pm, enjoy live music by local musician Dylan Burke, raffles, appetizers and a cash bar with proceeds benefiting BGCD's Clubhouses, members and families. The event will take place at Lower Mills Tavern at 2269 Dorchester Ave, Boston, MA 02124. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased at bit.ly/bgcdtakeover25. Please note, this is a 21+ event. A special thank you to our friends at Lower Mills Tavern for their support of this event!

For more information on BGCD's Young Professionals, please contact Hailey Cummings at hcummings@bgcdorchester.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Lunar New Year Celebration
January 11
- Milk Street Teen Cooking Series
January 13 & 27
- Power Forward Scholarship Night
January 15
- Keystone Cupcakes for Caring Event
January 20
- Marr-lins Swim Championship
January 25 & 26
- Young Professionals Event @
Lower Mills Tavern
January 30

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RECENT OBITUARIES



CADOGAN, Gloria V., 77, of Dorchester. Mother of Yvette L. Layne, Pearson M. Layne and Ernest L. Cadogan all of Dorchester. Sister of Leila Weekes, Chesterfield Cadogan, Carlisle Cadogan, Benjamin Cadogan and Carlene Blackman. Grandmother of 6. Gloria is also survived by many extended family and close friends. She worked as a Mental Health Professional at Mass Mental Health. Gloria was known for her kindness and generous personality.



CLARK, Anna Maria Almeida, 54, of Dorchester. Daughter to the late Alfred Clark and Maria Almeida. Anna leaves her children Ricardo Clark, Jasmine Clark, and Trey Antonio Illas, her siblings, and a host of many loving relatives and friends who will miss her dearly.



CONNOLLY, Joanne (Gill), 75, of Dorchester and South Boston. Daughter of the late

Cahill. Mother of Carolyn (Katie) Cahill, Jennifer (James) Walsh, and John (Borislava) Cahill. Grandmother of 4. Laura also leaves behind a giant circle of friends, colleagues, and community members who were all fortunate to have known her. Please consider making a donation to the Alzheimer's Association online at alz.org or by mail to 320 Nevada St. Suite 201, Newton, MA 02460, noting Laura Cahill.

John A. Gill and Lucy W. (Nash) Gill. Mother of Christine Mason of South Boston and Jennifer Connolly, BPD, and her partner Steven Collette, BPD, of Dorchester. "Gug" of 4. Sister of Patricia Anderson and her husband Donald Anderson of Mashpee. Joanne is also survived by several cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends. She is predeceased by her very best boy "Rusty", who is assuredly waiting for her scratches and treats. Donations in Joanne's memory may be made to The American Diabetes Association at diabetes.org, or to the National Kidney Foundation at kidney.org.



CURRY, Gail, 65, of Dorchester. Gail was born in Georgia, later settled in Boston. Gail is survived by her mother Gladys Curry of Boston. She is also survived by many family members and close friends. She will be missed by all who had the pleasure to have known and loved her.



DAVIS, Azell, 93, of Mattapan, formerly of Whitakers, NC. Son to the late Walter and Julia Davis. Azell was a metal finisher for over 35 years at Modern Electric in Roxbury until his retirement. He was a volunteer with Central

Elder Affairs for over twenty years. He also was a member-at-large on the Lena Park Association, ambassador of the National Law Enforcement for officers. Azell also worked closely with Former Mayors Ray Flynn, and Thomas Menino. His giving and philanthropy extended to The Urban League of Massachusetts, The United Negro College Fund, Susan B. Koman, Father Flanagan's Boys Home, and elder services. Azell is survived by his daughter and only child Delores Davis, grandson Charles P. Taylor Jr., goddaughter Cynthia Hawkins (Tony) of Brockton, sister Irma Travis of Las Vegas, three brothers-in-law Willie Brabham (Denise), Frank Brabham (Sylvia) of New York, and Carl Greggs Sr (Carol) of North Carolina, one sister-in-law Rosa Brabham of Virginia, along with a host of nieces and nephews. Azell is preceded in death by his wife of 70 years Agnes, along with his siblings George Davis Sr., Beatrice Ricks, Margert Thurman, Lois Davis, Morris Davis, Samuel Davis, Oliver Davis, and Prince Davis.



FINNEGAN, Patricia (Harden), 83, of Naples, Florida, formerly of Dorchester. Patricia is survived by her sons, David, Joe and Michael Finnegan, her daughter Trish Giampaoli, her 4 grandchildren and her sister Marie Mooney. She was an aunt to many nieces and nephews. Pat was a lab technician at Boston City Hospital then went on to be the proud owner of "Patricia Ann's School of Danc-

ing". Pat was preceded in death by her parents George and Eleanor, her brother George (Gig) Harden and former husband David I. Finnegan. Donations can be made to Dementia Society of America.

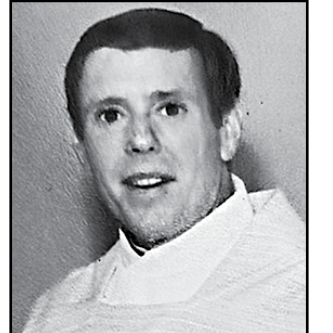
GRINDLEY, Helen L., of Milton, formerly of Dorchester. Helen was the daughter of the late John R. and Helen V. (Fallon) Grindley and the sister of the late Joan Grindley. Her warmth, intelligence, and kindness touched many lives, and she will be deeply missed by all who knew her. For many years, Helen was an educator of third and fourth graders, at the Rochambeau School and later retired from the Condon School in South Boston.



GUGALA, Maria (Solinska), 87, of Quincy, formerly of Dorchester and Poland. Daughter of the late Piotr Solinski and Katarzyna (Gordasz) Solinska. Mother of Malgorzata Freeman and her husband Robert Freeman of Dennis, and Robert Gugala and his wife Theresa Gugala of Palm Coast, Florida. "Babcia" to 5. Prababcia to Lucas McLaughlin. She was preceded in death by her sisters Nastusia, Hanusia, Agnieszka and brother Kazik. She is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

KELLY, Gerard F. of Belmont. Husband of the late Mary E. (Edwards) Kelly. Father of Cynthia D. Norman (formerly married to Jeffrey L. Norman) of Arlington, Gerard F. Kelly, Jr. of Rockport, and Brian J. Kelly and his wife Brenna of Dorchester. Grandfather of 5.

Great-grandfather of 2. Brother of Robert F. Ohanesian, Maureen Kelly, Andrea Pasodoro and Janice Doherty. Also survived by his longtime companion, Patricia A. Currie of Belmont. Member of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts, Lexington Elks Club, Belmont Kiwanis Club, Ty-Rods, and New England Media Group. Donations may be made in his memory to the MSPCA, mspca.org



MORAN, Brother James J., SJ, 71, of Weston. Jim Moran entered the Jesuits and became a brother, working as Prefect of Students and assistant Principal at Bishop Connelly High School in Fall River, and then at Boston College High School (1980-93). Son of the late John E. and Josephine E. (Ryan) Moran. Brother of Kevin Moran and John Zorsch, Jack Moran and Mary Ellen Moran and the late Bobby Moran. Also survived by nephews and a niece as well as his many Jesuit Brothers. Donations may be made to Jesuit Community, Campion Center, 319 Concord Rd., Weston, MA 02493 to support its ministry of care for elderly and infirm Jesuits.



MULLEN, Coleman "Coley", 73, of Braintree, formerly of Dorchester and Co. Galway, Ireland. Husband of the late Annie M. (McDonagh) Mullen. Father of Angela and her husband Kieran Kelly of Braintree, Aine and her husband Martin McDonagh of Canton, and Caroline Mullen of Weymouth. Grandfather of 7. Son of the late Patrick Mullen and Annie (Faherty) Mullen. Brother of Patrick Mullen and his late wife Anna Mullen of Florida, Myles Mullen and his wife Teresa Mullen of Hanover, Rev. Michael Mullen of Florida, Eileen McDonagh and her husband Paraic McDonagh of Milton, and the late Rev. Johnny Mullen, Joe Mullen, Maureen and her husband Michael Flaherty, and Bernard Mullen. Coley is also survived by many nieces

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and nephews. Coley was a member of the Laborers Union, Local 223 for 50 years. Donations in Coley's memory may be made to the Alzheimer's Association atact.alz.org.



PERRY, Daisy Bell, 80, of Mattapan formerly of Edenton, North Carolina. Daughter of the late Bernice Perry. Mother of Samantha (Perry) Coston. Sister of Isiah Dillard, twin Abell Perry, Delories Perry, Charles Dillard, Elizabeth Jackson, Percy Ray Perry and his wife Elmira, Vanessa Perry Gay and her husband Robert, the late Janet Perry, Field Perry and Eddie Perry. Also survived by many neices, nephews, extended family and friends.

PROCTOR, William H., 86, of Dorchester, retired Boston Police Department. Husband of the late Laurretta (Norton). Dad to Cindy



Crowley and her husband Neil; Edward Proctor; Tracy Doyle and her husband Michael, all of Dorchester. Papa to 5; great grandfather to 3. William was predeceased by his siblings Robert, Joan Sheehy, Thomas, Patricia Doherty, and Frederick (Dick).



SAIMPRY, Angela 73, of Mattapan.

TRACEY, Ralph, 94. Ralph lived in Mattapan, Brookline and Chestnut Hill throughout his life. He was predeceased by his parents Frances (Wolkovich) and Joseph Tracey and his older

sister Selma. He was a First Class Staff Sergeant in the 26th Yankee Division Massachusetts Army National Guard. He earned several citations including the Army Commendation Medal in 1980. Ralph was a member of the Brookline Elks Lodge #1327 for over 30 years. He is survived by his wife Brenda Shapiro Tracey. Donations in his memory can be made to the American Cancer Society.



VENCHIS, Helena (Wolk-Karaczewski). 93, of Dorchester. Wife of the late Michael Venchis. Mother of John Venchis of Dorchester, and Mary Vintoniv and her husband Miro Vintoniv of Jamaica Plain. "Babcia" of 4. Sister of Sofia Wolk-Karaczewski of Belarus, and pre-deceased by 5 other siblings. Helena is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

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